

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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OFFICE OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND IMPROVEMENT

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DESIGN FEASIBILITY OF NATIONAL TESTS IN
READING AND MATH

MEETING THREE

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FRIDAY,

FEBRUARY 28, 1997

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The meeting was held in the Barnard Auditorium in the Federal Office Building (FOB-10) at 600 Independence Avenue, S.W., Room 2411, Washington, D.C. at 12:30 p.m., Acting Deputy Secretary, Mike Smith, Chairman, presiding.

PRESENT:

MIKE SMITH, Chairman
SUE BETKA
RUBEN CARRIEDO
HELEN CHANG
MIKE COHEN
JOSEPH CONATY
STEVE FERRARA

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THOMAS FISHER
REBECCA KOPRIVA
WAYNE MARTIN
GARY PHILLIPS
JOHN POGGIO
DORIS REDFIELD
ED REIDY
GERRY SHELTON

ALSO PRESENT:

JENNIFER DAVIS
GEORGE ELFORD
LAWRENCE FEINBERG
EUGENE OWEN
CARLOS RODRIGUEZ
LARRY SNOWHITE

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<u>AGENDA ITEM</u>	<u>PAGE NUMBER</u>
Overview and Purpose of Meeting Marshall Smith	6
Contractual Issues Helen Chang Representative, Contracts Office	21
Design of the National Reading and Math Tests Gary Phillips	25
Panel Discussion	26
Questions and Discussion of Technical Issues	101

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P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

(12:54 p.m.)

CHAIRMAN SMITH: My name is Mike Smith.

I'm the Acting Deputy Secretary right now. This meeting is about testing. It's not a surprise to most of you. It's most of the meetings you go to, I guess.

Just so that we've got it on the record, this is on the record. In fact, everything will be taped. This is basically a public meeting. So anything you say will be, in fact, put down on a piece of paper, put down on the Internet.

It will be available -- I don't know. How long does it take us, a couple of days, to get it?

MR. PHILLIPS: I think about a week.

CHAIRMAN SMITH: About a week to get out in public. So you'll be able to see all the wise things that you've said in a week.

MR. MARTIN: Does that mean don't make trouble?

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN SMITH: No. Actually, it means if you're going to make trouble, make it in an

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articulate manner so that everybody out there can understand you.

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN SMITH: It's always daunting to look at your own comments when they come out in a public transcript.

So, at least for a while, you should just mention your name just before you talk. It just makes it a little bit easier for the people.

Why don't we just run around the room very quickly and introduce ourselves? Sue, why don't you just start?

MS. BETKA: I'm Sue Betka in the Office of the Under Secretary.

MR. SHELTON: Gerry Shelton, California Department of Education.

MR. MARTIN: Wayne Martin, CCSSO.

MR. POGGIO: John Poggio, University of Kansas.

MS. REDFIELD: Doris Redfield, Virginia Department of Education.

MR. REIDY: Ed Reidy, Kentucky Department

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of Education.

MS. KOPRIVA: Rebecca Kopriva, Delaware
Department of Public Instruction.

MR. FISHER: Tom Fisher, Florida
Department of Education.

MR. CONATY: My name is Joe Conaty. I'm
with the OERI in the Department.

MR. FERRARA: Steve Ferrara from the
Maryland Department of Education.

MR. CARRIEDO: I'm Ruben Carriedo from
San Diego City Schools in California.

MS. CHANG: I'm Helen Chang from the
Contracts Office here at the Department of Education.

MR. PHILLIPS: I'm Gary Phillips in OERI.

OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE OF MEETING

CHAIRMAN SMITH: I'm going to turn to
Helen in just a minute. She will explain to you --
or, actually, she will tell you that you're not giving
up anything by coming to this meeting except some of
your own time. That is, you're not giving up any of
your rights to bid on potential contracts or grants
under this, but we want her to tell you that and her

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to be able to answer questions from you about that if you have any.

As you all know, any privileged information would begin to cut you out of the possibility of bidding on something. That's one reason why this is an open meeting. So it's clearly not privileged information.

But you may have other questions that come to you or that you have been asked to ask or whatever. Please feel absolutely free to do that. We don't want to reduce the competition in any conceivable way, and we certainly don't want to reduce the strength and quality of the final product that comes out of here.

So this should be as open and candid as you can possibly make it. Ask us the tough questions because this is really the time to ask it. We can still change things now.

Gary will begin to lay out time lines and the steps that we're going to take and so on. I want to make just a couple of opening remarks so we set a context for you, so you've got some idea of why we're

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doing this. Somebody seems to come in out of the blue.

And you've all been working on your own state assessments for a long period of time. We've been supporting that. We'll continue to support that.

This effort that we're going through in testing and so on does not change our emphasis one bit on the need to have very strong state reforms, strong case in challenging state standards, assessments along with them, and so on, that whole mixture of things.

What it comes from, in effect, it comes from a deep interest that the President and First Lady have in education, first of all. That's kind of number one.

Number two, it comes from a sense that the President can be a real leader, even as a national leader, which a lot of people have questioned in the past, but a national spokesperson as the President can really help to lead educational reform.

I think that discovery or that awareness came to all of us during the past six or eight months.

If you think back 12 months, we were either out of

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work exactly 12 months ago or we were darn close to out of work or we had just been out of work. And the destruction of the Department of Education was on everybody's lips.

Five months ago we won two budget battles in the Congress, where we got more than we asked for in the appropriations. And four months ago, just before the election, education was ranked as the most important issue in the election.

So it's an incredible turnaround in 12 months. And it's a significant part of the turnaround because the President fought very, very, very firmly to the stand that education was absolutely critical, critical in his budget and critical in his reelection campaign and critical to the nation, that we move quickly on it.

So we've got a growing awareness of something that was very important to him, obviously very important to the First Lady and the Secretary and a lot of other people.

The Attorney General talks as much about education as she does about justice. Actually, she

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talks about justice in the context of education. So these things fit together in her mind in an integral fashion.

So it's an entire cabinet of people and the First Family that are really behind all of these issues. And the President, I think, along with the Secretary and me and others, saw the standards movement as entering into a new phase. That is, over the past five or six years there's been a real question about whether or not states would adopt standards and move on them at all.

I think we're beyond that phase. Standards as a notion are accepted. A lot of the assessments are accepted and so on. So we've entered into kind of a second phase. Indeed, there has been an acceptance. OERI is moving on it.

But I think everybody has noticed that the second phase is going to be tougher than the first. It's the implementation phase. It's not just developing the tests. It's getting them used and used in more ways from your perspective. It's also digging it deep into the minds and hearts of teachers and

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parents and so on.

The implementation is always harder than the first blush of reforms. And that's where reforms typically die. And we will worry about that. We will always continue to be worried about that, as I'm sure you all are.

We are also worried about the fact that in some places the standards weren't quite as rigorous as I think most of us think they should be.

I don't know if you've all seen, you've probably all seen, Mark Musick's little table of comparisons between the NAEP -- I guess it's in NAEP reading -- the proficiency levels in NAEP and passage levels in states.

There's quite a lot of difference in many states. Some states actually -- I believe it is Delaware. One of the states is more rigorous -- I believe it is Delaware -- more rigorous than the NAEP itself. Most of the states aren't. In some of them, there's really a great difference.

And so we have been talking. The talks began about two months ago, three months ago to talk

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a lot about how to reinvigorate, how to begin to jump the nation over this plateau that we've entered into and to really push to try to now stimulate more challenging standards and really get the message out that all kids can learn and so on, just continue to really pound the message and make it a fairly focused fashion, talked about a lot of things. We talked about a White House conference in education. We talked about a variety of other stuff.

Pretty much in that gap while we were talking the TIMSS report came out. The TIMSS report was really a very important report in this whole thing from our thinking because it pointed out very clearly that the rest was still really grappling in mathematics in particular.

But, more than that, it contained in it some research, which pointed out that our teaching was different from countries that do well in TIMSS and our content was different from countries that do well in TIMSS, not like a science. It's two important things in teaching and learning, teaching itself in the context.

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More than that, though, it reinforced a lot of research that had been going on in the U.S. over the last 20 years. I mean, although the Maggie Lamperts and Tom Rombergs and lots of other folks have pointed out that, in fact, our teaching is different in some places in the country than it is in other places, that our content is different, some places than other places, and our teaching is deeper and more thoughtful and engages the kids more and our content is more challenging, the kids do better.

So the TIMSS really reinforced a lot of other work that was going on, work that I know you all are familiar with. But I know that you also know it's very hard to get that message through to teachers and principals and the folks out in the field.

In fact, the TIMSS gave us a lever that we haven't had really in the past in quite the same way because the press in kind of a wonderful way didn't just play up the horse race as they often do.

They played up why the horse race turned out the way it did. And that was really critical.

So, as we talked about standards and we

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looked at TIMSS and thought about it and as we thought about the eighth grade TIMSS in particular -- the notion of eighth grade TIMSS, that's a transitional stage in mathematics.

If you don't have some challenging mathematics by eighth grade, you're not going to enter in. You're not going to have the opportunity to enter into more challenging mathematics in high school. You're kind of phased out.

If you're a small high school, if you don't get into the higher track math course, you probably won't get into the higher track English course or history course or whatever. You tend to be tracked out of it. That really becomes one of those gates in many ways at eighth grade.

We also know that the same thing is true in fourth grade reading, that if you don't succeed in reading independently by the end of the third grade, beginning of fourth grade, and into fourth grade, that is just about the best predictor of failing, of dropping out of high school, of failing courses later on in school because you're expected to read

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independently fourth grade, fifth grade, sixth grade, seventh grade, and eighth grade. You're supposed to read to learn science and social studies and so on and gain understanding in that way and not be just taught reading. In fact, in many schools, people stop teaching reading.

So math in eighth grade and reading at fourth grade turn out to be two absolutely critical areas for the two basic content areas, two basic content areas.

And if one thinks about this, the frameworks that have been developed and the content standards that have been developed throughout the states in mathematics, most of them, not all of them but certainly 90 percent of them, owe a considerable debt to the NCTM. That is, the NCTM has almost always been looked at when states are developing math standards.

And when you think about reading, if you stay away from early reading and you just talk about fourth grade, you stay away from instructional strategies relative to reading, there isn't a lot of

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argument about the need for kids to be able to read independently, to read at least at the basic level according to NAEP by fourth grade.

And so a set of standards, a set of a pair of assessments that are really built upon reading competently, reading independently by fourth grade, and achieving some more complex mathematics than is typically offered to most of our students in our schools at eighth grade are two pretty noncontroversial areas. They're areas where the nation as a whole can come to some understanding.

Consensus is the wrong word. There are always going to be folks who would dissent from this.

But, by and large, educators, by and large, the public understand what we're talking about when we talk about something like algebra, more complex math by eighth grade. And clearly they understand reading independently by fourth grade.

So we have the TIMSS, and we have the fourth grade NAEP. We have two sets of frameworks.

We have moved. We have moved from -- Gary will explain this to you. We're going to move to the

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eighth grade NAEP framework in math, now the eighth grade TIMSS framework, for a bunch of different reasons.

One is it's more reflective of the U.S. Another, it's more elaborated. It's easier to do. Another, it's nice to have the same kinds of performance standards, at least the names, basic, proficient.

We'll obviously have both sets of performance standards on the eighth grade math; that is, performance standards attached to the international assessments, but also the performance standards that go along and that map the NAEP.

We said to ourselves, "Look, let's see if we can put some high octane into this reform measure by having the President come out and, say, make a challenge, say, "By 1999 we'll have an individual test so every parent in this country will know whether their child can read," a fourth grade parent, "can read at at least the basic level and hopefully higher in reading and can achieve to a basic level, a proficient level, or toward the international average

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or above in mathematics at eighth grade."

And we will put around that, not just throw out a test number, but we'll put around that a serious challenge to get ready by 1999 and 2000 and 2001 and 2002. So we're talking about successive goals every year, not just the challenge, but we'll mobilize. We'll mobilize the government around these challenges.

We have already started with America Reads, as you know. We had Read Right Now in the Department based on a primal initiative. And that's gone out in the summers and put out kits and everything to folks, to parents and to others, to help their kids learn how to read, tutors and so on. Now we have the America Reads, which is mobilizing lots of tutors.

But beyond that, we can mobilize Title I, put out lots of good information in our reading materials. We can mobilize the IDEA Program around the same kinds of goals.

There are lots and lots and lots of parts of the Department that can get engaged in this. There

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are also lots and lots and lots of parts, other parts, to the government. The military is all excited about putting out tutors and helping kids in areas where military bases are located.

In mathematics, Departments of Engineering and again Department of Defense, obviously the Smithsonian, the National Academy of Sciences. They're all pumped up about mobilizing masses of engineers and others to provide some help but also putting out good materials and working with people on good materials.

Plus, we came up with the idea of constructing a new test every year so at the end of the time when a test is being used, the test will go out over the Internet, over the World Wide Web, and be made available to everybody in the country, but again glossed, put on a variety of different ideas about how kids can improve or about other extended items that parents could use with their kids or the teacher could use and so on.

So we've got not just a test etiquette now with I think a commonly accepted set of standards

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and goals, but we're going to really push very, very hard to try to help parents, very young parents, particularly in reading, older parents in math and engineers and so on, mobilize to really change the nature of the achievements that these kids come through.

You can imagine the IRA is all pumped up in reading, the NCTM. It's not just the Urban League.

It's the Boys and Girls Clubs. Almost every educational group is involved. So it can be a very big press on something that we see as really engaging the nation around education, around some really common understandable goals, which should only help everybody in education. The goal is to really just get everybody involved and everybody helping improve the overall education system.

That's the setting. That's why we're doing it. That's why we're doing what we're doing, basically. And what Gary will do is lay out to you how we're doing it.

In 1999, to have the first test out in 1999, you can all sit there and say, "My God. That's

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very, very fast." And these tests have got to meet the same kinds of standards that your tests do. We're not going to go for lousy tests. They've got to psychometrically be up to par. They've got to meet all the same kinds of provisions that any good tests do.

Gary? Oh, sorry. Right, right.

CONTRACTUAL ISSUES

MS. CHANG: My name is Helen Chang, and I'm a contracting officer here in the Department. Part of that job is that I have a legal responsibility to see that the Department's procurement is conducted in a fair, full, and open manner, and in accord with the law.

Because of that, there are several things that we really want you to know today because we do anticipate that this is such a large effort that we're going to need contractual support in a variety of places for the development and the support of these tests.

In order to fulfill our requirements, we also need to have good communication. The FAR asks

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that we do market research. And that's part of why we've invited you here today, but we want to make sure that you understand that this is open. And it's different because normally we don't announce our procurements prior to announcing them in the CBD.

But we at the Department want to follow and do follow the principles of conducting our process in a fair and open manner. We always try to have the maximum amount of information to everybody in an equal manner. So we again anticipate that we will need contractual support.

We are going to put today's discussions on the Web. And if we look to the CBD, you'll see that we have another meeting announced for next Tuesday. That's a public meeting. And a transcript from that will also be on the Web.

We're also contemplating and working toward putting the draft of our statement of work on the Web and asking the public to give us support as well as comments on what we write in the statement of work because we're really looking for a way to buy the services and products that we need, but also we need

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everybody's help as to how we do it.

And then prior to issuing the RFP, we also are contemplating having a pre-solicitation conference. We're hoping that in this way, that we're both following the law and getting our market research as well as conducting the procurements in as fair and open a manner as we can.

I'm here to answer any questions that you might have on the procurements or questions, comments.

By your attending this meeting today, you have given up no rights. You are welcome to bid on any of the procurements that we announce.

CHAIRMAN SMITH: Any comments, thoughts?

(No response.)

MR. PHILLIPS: Okay. Well, I thank you, Helen.

Let me say a few prior statements before I get into the how we're considering doing this. One is that Mike has to leave at 1:40. So if you have questions or comments that you would like Mike to hear, you need to make them soon, which means you can interrupt me at any time, also particularly the

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questions that deal with the why. I can answer the how. I think Mike probably should answer the whys.

So keep that in mind. That's about another half-hour or so.

Again, also, even after Mike leaves, please feel free to stop me at any moment, ask a question. We have plenty of time to chat about whatever you want to talk about.

I have maybe a half-hour, 45 minutes worth of stuff to tell you. And that could be spread out any way that you're comfortable with. So please let us hear your questions. Really, it's helpful to us to hear what your questions are and what your concerns are.

As Mike said, we're right in the middle of trying to zero in on what we're going to do and what the RFP will look like. The more input we get up front, the better. So that's why we're having this meeting. We want to get your ideas.

So why don't we get into some of the substance of it.

DESIGN OF THE NATIONAL READING AND MATH TESTS

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MR. PHILLIPS: There are a couple of things that are treated as givens here. These are things that were decided really I think in many ways at the White House. So this is sort of like when Kennedy says you're going to the moon. Well, this is what we are shooting for.

The test will provide an annual indication. It's an annual test. It's going to be an indicator-type test, not going to be like one of your state and local tests that gives lots of diagnostic information. It won't do that. It will give us overall indications.

It's going to affect the individual student proficiency. So it's a test for individual students. And the results will be reported back to parents and teachers.

This is not like NAEP or TIMSS, which is a survey assessment that assesses the proficiencies of distributions. This test will be like the test you're used to, which is to assess proficiencies individually.

PANEL DISCUSSION

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MS. REDFIELD: So, Gary, it's a census test, not a survey?

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes, right, but it's voluntary. The census, the whole population can take it.

MS. REDFIELD: Right.

MR. REIDY: This is Ed Reidy.

I'm assuming you're going to talk about why it's real. Could we do that since you have to leave?

MR. PHILLIPS: Sure.

MR. REIDY: You picked reading at the fourth grade, math at the eighth grade. One could just for policy argue that the reading required in high school is quite different than the fourth grade. Why not have gatekeepers at both grade levels?

You talk about linking these tests to the NAEP standards or to the TIMSS standards. We also have a project going on linking to state standards. Why have you decided to go directly with the task, rather than to rely upon linking strategies?

I see a switch from TIMSS to NAEP.

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That's a little encouraging because some of us thought TIMSS was based upon some old technology and didn't do much with asking kids to construct anything.

I've got a lot of questions on why.

CHAIRMAN SMITH: Why in terms of the fourth and eighth grade, first of all.

MR. REIDY: Yes. Why the fourth grade, why a national test, why not relying on linking.

CHAIRMAN SMITH: Well, first of all, we wanted to make it available to everybody. And we're not at all confident that we're going to be able to link to everybody.

MR. POGGIO: This is John Poggio.

Why can't you have both?

CHAIRMAN SMITH: Have linking as well?

MR. POGGIO: Sure. If we're going to test it, let states do what it is they can in light of standards you might specify as priorities that they would want to consider.

CHAIRMAN SMITH: You can now, though.

MR. POGGIO: Not if you come up with a national exam. That strips a large degree of freedom.

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CHAIRMAN SMITH: National exam, but it's only in two --

MR. POGGIO: Right.

CHAIRMAN SMITH: This is to make a statement, among other things. It is to be very, very clear that we want every student to have this opportunity, it to be clear that we expect every student to achieve to those same standards, to achieve to standards the level of the NAEP, at least in basic or proficient in reading and so on and mathematics as well.

So it isn't intended to usurp with -- I need to go back to Ed's question -- to usurp with a series of different tests. And it is intended at the same time to be as universal as it can be, even though it is limited.

In your case, it can be as universal as possible. You can do this, and nobody is going to stop you from doing this. And we'll help if we possibly can.

But the point of our coming out if we came out in terms of 12th in reading or 12th in math,

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it looks like we're just taking over. We don't want to take over.

What we want to do is put out a pair of rifle shots that are in very, very important areas that can help stimulate a lot of activity out there. That's the motivation.

MR. REIDY: So people shouldn't view these as the first two areas and will follow with national tests in other areas shortly thereafter?

CHAIRMAN SMITH: I don't want to predict. That is not --

MR. REIDY: What is your opinion?

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yes. That isn't in the plans right now. I don't know that it will be in the plans in the future. I don't think it will be. I think there is a balance here that we can strive to attain in a federal initiation, national stimulus, and state activity and state control.

Do you know Mike Cohen from the White House? Most of you know him.

MR. COHEN: I used to know you before I

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was at the White House.

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN SMITH: He's, as you all know, our expert on federal-state relations.

(Laughter.)

MR. COHEN: Hi. I'm from the federal government.

(Laughter.)

MR. COHEN: And I'm here to intrude. First of all, I'm sorry I'm late. So I missed sort of your comments leading up to this. But as I listen to this conversation, a couple of things hit me, at least in terms of what influenced and shaped the President's thinking on this.

One is, as you know, he's long believed that there ought to be national standards and tests as a way of both raising standards and making sure that there's a very clear signal that we expect all kids to learn to the same levels.

Secondly, with regard to the specific tests that we're talking about, the intent was to create tests that would not replace the ones that you

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all are developing and using at the state and local level, particularly those of you who have invested a lot of time and effort in developing your own standards and developing assessments aligned to that.

But it's in recognition of the fact that one drawback to Kentucky having its own standards and assessments and Maryland having its own standards and assessments and so on and so forth is that no parent ever gets straight, simple information about how each kid is doing compared to a widely recognized national standard.

And the questions about whether our kids are doing better or worse, not just than they were last year, but compared to kids elsewhere, you know the debates that go on endlessly about that.

So this is something that's designed to basically say, at least in the two critical areas, fourth grade reading and eighth grade math, where they're sort of pivotal transition subjects and grade levels -- you make it in those areas, you're a lot more likely to succeed in further learning than if you don't -- at least in those areas, there's a widely

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accepted standard test that we think we can build on that will be designed, we think, to supplement what you're already doing so that you can continue to provide information to schools and teachers and kids and parents about their performance relative to your own standards but also answer that additional question: How well is my kid doing compared to something that is widely recognized? That's at least what the thinking behind this has been.

CHAIRMAN SMITH: Just one addition to that. We haven't mentioned and you may not know when Mike said it's not to supplant the kinds of tests you've got, we're going to license these things. And they're going to be licensed to you and to private publishers and to districts if districts give out their own tests.

We're not going to do this test ourselves, managing it and scoring it and so on. We're not going to do it in terms of developing it. It will go out for competitive bid, obviously.

But once the licenses are done, one of the things that we're trying to do and one of the

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things that we need from you is your best hunches about how best to design a test so that it fits into the battery of assessments that you already give.

Ruben?

MR. CARRIEDO: Ruben Carriedo from San Diego.

I don't know whether this is the right place to ask this question or whether I should wait.

I really need to hear the --

MR. COHEN: If it's a hard one, you should wait.

MR. CARRIEDO: -- assumption about --

(Laughter.)

MR. CARRIEDO: I really need to hear the assumption surrounding consensus national standards, that they exist, that the test is going to drive the consensus around national standards because I don't believe that they exist.

There are many battles being fought right now in states about: Why are you using those standards and why don't your standards look like these standards?

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And consensus in California about NCTM is even -- I won't say California. A state in the West --

(Laughter.)

MR. CARRIEDO: It's very shaky. So I really need to hear more about this consensus that exists around national standards.

CHAIRMAN SMITH: This is something I mentioned, Mike. Really, I think if you look at most of the state standards, you'll find that they are not, the performance levels now, but the content standards part of this -- many states don't have performance standards, actually, but they do have content standards.

By and large, they are quite similar to -- they're held by -- let me call it heavily influenced by the NCTM standards. California is going through at least two versions of being heavily influenced by the NCTM standards. And I think in the long run you're going to end up there, in part because of TIMSS and in part because of a growing understanding that, in fact, in California you can't

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go through these incredible things of being progressive and regressive and so on and you expect to come out with anything. You've got to just get some stability and go for something. I think that's beginning to enter into California's understanding.

I've looked at a lot of them. I don't like some of them. I think some of them are kind of wishy-washy and so on, but you can see the influence of the NCTM standards in them.

And if you look at reading at fourth grade or third grade or fifth grade or wherever a state happens to be instructive, then, gosh, they are very, very similar.

Now, performance standards aren't similar. What they expect the kids -- you know, there's no difference. Those are really quite dissimilar.

MR. CARRIEDO: But some people would argue that a content standard is really only the beginning of the discussion.

CHAIRMAN SMITH: Right.

MR. CARRIEDO: You don't really get to

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the meat and potatoes until you start dealing with the performance.

CHAIRMAN SMITH: That's exactly right.

MR. CARRIEDO: And if you read the EdWeek summary of state by state, it was very clear that there are a lot of different things going on across the country in the name of standards. And they're very different.

So if you said that one of the purposes of this national test would be to drive consensus around national standards, I'd say, well, that may help, yes. That sounds all right, but I don't believe it exists right now.

MR. COHEN: Let me take a shot at that.

CHAIRMAN SMITH: Okay.

MR. COHEN: At one level I think you're right about it not existing. That is, if you look at what state standards are out there, they are in some cases so buried in the level of detail and clarity that's in them that it is difficult to discern a consensus because that requires you first to discern enough meaning from some standards. That itself is a

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stretch.

So, on the one hand, just about everybody you talk to says, "Yes. We're doing the NCTM standards here." On the other hand, what that actually means is varied from place to place.

In some sense we've been wandering around that for a very long time. That is, I mean, the notion that, first, the content standards are the first step and then you get to the really hard stuff -- this was in the conversation that you and I had I think about six years ago.

MR. CARRIEDO: Yes.

MR. COHEN: I think outside -- well, actually, those of us who have been in these debates for a long time and people who have not spent their professional careers in these debates, people are actually getting frustrated that it's taking as long as it is to get past the first step.

So I think we've got a situation in math, for instance, where you can assert that there is pretty wide agreement on the kinds of stuff that kids ought to learn, even if it is not clearly reflected in

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every document that everyone has written, and then act as though it's true and then use an assessment that will help that people can sign onto that will help make it more true in the future than it is now.

And the result of that will be, I think, more uniformity, more consensus of expectation about what kids ought to learn in math, both at the sort of very general level as well as what's actually taught, more of that than exists now. And I would argue that would be a good thing if it happens.

So there is at one level a consensus and at another level work to be done to really cause action that is consistent with the consensus that appears to be there. And that's precisely what we're trying to help happen.

MR. POGGIO: This is John Poggio.

There is a sense I think we all recognize that what gets tested is what gets taught. And that seems to be at the core of the comments at the moment.

So I'm going to give you some practical examples because we're talking about what we sense is right.

Well, I looked at the standards. They all seem to be

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the same from the 50 states.

We recognize at this point that with regard to the NCTM standards, while generally there is acceptance, we are beginning to recognize some disagreements with where they're going. That is not necessarily my position, but we realize that.

I think with time and perhaps by 1999 there could be a groundswell of opinion that says these are wrongheaded, to use a phrase. Let me switch from there to reading, though, which I think is far more problematic.

In a real life example, our state attempts on a regular basis to incorporate some NAEP items so that we can do our own benchmarking against how all our schools are doing relative to the nation.

So we have taken --

MR. COHEN: John, could I just ask you which state you're from?

MR. POGGIO: It's Kansas.

MR. COHEN: Okay.

MR. POGGIO: We've taken NAEP reading selections and, using our specifications, our

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standards, could not in good faith go forward with the NAEP items. Yet, that's the framework you're talking about using.

The NAEP items come from a model of reading that is not the model our state thinks we need to be using. Another example of that -- and that was at grades 4, 8, and 12. We just couldn't absorb enough of the NAEP items to carry out a credible cross-linking study, as it were.

Coincidentally, Ed Reidy and I from Kentucky were at a meeting. What we discovered is that at the high school level for reading, we had both independently in our states adopted the very same reading-extended selection, a story that went on for 2,500 words.

His state created a bunch of questions.

Our state created a bunch of questions. He uses a different model than we do once again. So there's a lack of fit.

The concern to ignore linking back to states in some way says that in the end you will have such power with your assessment when you say your

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child has passed or failed the national test, even though your opening remarks were, "We don't want to disturb what you're doing at the local level, at the state level."

When students start performing poorly on your tests, it will cause us to change everything we're doing. I just want to make you aware of that.

Whether it's right or wrong I think is a whole different set of questions. Where do you effect change?

CHAIRMAN SMITH: We'll look at the technical stuff at some point. I mean, what's the --

MR. POGGIO: The technical stuff in the sense of: Are the tests good or are they bad?

CHAIRMAN SMITH: No, not just good or bad. I mean, what's the relationship between the two tests? When you say that there are different models, what's the --

MR. POGGIO: Well, we recognize at the elementary level that students can be taught to read using a phonetics approach. You would clearly create different questions if that was the model you bought,

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as opposed to a basic skills approach.

CHAIRMAN SMITH: By fourth grade?

MR. POGGIO: By fourth grade, absolutely.

CHAIRMAN SMITH: In fourth grade?

MR. POGGIO: Sure, sure.

CHAIRMAN SMITH: I'm not sure you would, but in many places maybe you would.

Go ahead.

MS. REDFIELD: Doris Redfield, Virginia.

If I put on my policy, state policy, kind of hat, I'm going to be concerned about money kinds of problems. for one thing.

And then just some philosophical issues: one, the question, how would the new text be different conceptually from taking the existing NAEP tests and those subjects and grade areas and just extending the development and use down so that the data could be accurate for student problems?

And the other question is: How would the data provided be different from a parent's point of view from the data they can already get with their state administrators and nationally known reference

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standardized tests?

So, from that perspective -- and the thing is another layer. How is it different? Why should we pay for it?

MR. COHEN: Let me take a shot at the second one first. I'm not sure I'm technically competent to answer the first one, but I hope someone around here could.

States, lots of states, give nationally norm tests. They can tell and parents can find out how well the kid is doing compared to a national norm.

Right? Some states will tell you how well the kid is doing compared to whatever cutoff point the state has as a proficiency level.

One of the things we've seen from comparing the percentage of kids who meet either the basic or proficient level in our NAEP assessments with what the states' own cutoff points are, you see very quickly that states vary tremendously from one to another with regard to the performance standards that they set.

I don't know if you've got these charts

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in the handouts or not, and I won't have the numbers exactly right here. This was run in The Washington Post series last week in which your Virginia standards were featured. This is the day before with the Wisconsin ones.

Maryland, it's this. You don't mention that you're working at the White House, Mike. People just help you from all over the place.

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN SMITH: Ready with your materials.

MR. COHEN: Right. I mean, did you bring enough for everybody, Ed, or is this --

MR. REIDY: No. Multiple use here.

MR. COHEN: In Kentucky, this is, if I remember correctly, fourth grade reading? Yes. Okay.

In the fourth grade reading in Kentucky, 26 percent of the kids met the NAEP proficient standard. Okay?

On its own test, about 30 percent of the kids met what the equivalent of Kentucky's proficient standard would be. Okay?

In Wisconsin, 35 percent of the kids met

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the NAEP proficient standard. And 88 percent of the kids met the state's own performance standard. Okay?

Parents in Wisconsin are getting very different information than parents in Kentucky about basically the same kind of performance from kids.

MS. REDFIELD: But maybe I'm not asking the question I really want to ask.

MR. COHEN: Okay. I'll try to answer it.

MS. REDFIELD: To me that's how they set the standards. It doesn't say to me there needs to be a different test layered on top of or in addition to whatever else is going on.

In other words, as a parent, if I get a report for how my kid did on an indicator test in math and reading, I say, "Okay. My kid got this score compared to a percentile, national percentile, rank" or whatever.

Now, if the state lays a standard on what that means, that's one thing, but the separate issue is: Is the state laying a standard on its own test? And is the intent to bring those two together so that you don't have three layers?

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CHAIRMAN SMITH: You're being too analytical about this thing in some ways. This is a rifle shot. What's going to happen in 1999 is there's going to be a tremendous amount of attention given to whether or not kids in your district or in your state if you took the test or why you didn't take the test in your state, actually -- maybe if you didn't take it, given to reading and to math, given to two basics that every person in this country believe their kid should succeed in.

You can't ask the parent out there about whether or not their kid should be able to read independently in the fourth grade. You ask that question, and you're going to get a yes every time, every time. Okay?

Now they're going to have the same standard. They're going to be able to look and compare how their kid does and how their kids in that school do and how their kids in that district do compared to kids in Virginia, they'll look at; Mississippi, they'll look at; Montana; Wisconsin. And what they're going to find is that they have gotten

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different information.

We know when we go into inner cities now and kids get A's in the classrooms in inner cities.

And they take some objective, unbiased assessment.

If they get an A in that inner city, very often that's equivalent to a C in the suburbs. They're getting a very different standard. They're not being asked to learn the same kinds of things.

We are now out there throughout the country comparing states and comparing, say, inner cities and poor rural areas within the states, the suburbs. We're giving different kinds of curricula depending upon where the kid lives and who the kids are. I mean different kinds now not in terms of different strategies, phonics, let's say, or whole language.

I actually believe you can use either one of them and still succeed at fourth grade. Actually, you should be using a mix of them if you're a good teacher.

But the point here is that if you have different performance levels expected of these kids,

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you're going to get different performance levels from them, from the kids.

And what we're trying to do is trying to do two things. We're trying to give a wake-up call to serious standards, and we're trying to also give a wake-up call to everybody out there who says that certain kids can't learn how to read.

MR. COHEN: I want to piggyback on that for a second because I've been thinking about your question. Let me try a couple of other answers based on a couple of different understandings of it.

One is you're saying: Well, why do we need another test; right? Why can't we just use the test that we've already --

MS. REDFIELD: I think there's a test versus standards kind of issue going on.

MR. COHEN: To some extent, maybe there is, though I'm not sure about that. But I do know one thing, that if you try to explain to parents that, even though your kid took this test, we've done some fairly fancy statistical stuff that tells you how well your kid would have done on that test; right?

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MS. REDFIELD: Right.

MR. COHEN: That's not a good idea.

Okay?

(Laughter.)

MS. REDFIELD: If you have to explain it, don't.

MR. COHEN: That's right. So in that sense, you know, adding a test is easier.

Now, a couple of other things. One is -- and maybe this won't turn out to be workable this way, but if this test can be kept short enough so that it's something that a state adds to its own battery of tests, it may be from the point of view of the kid or the parent.

They don't know how many tests they're taking. And they get a score back that says on Kentucky's standards, you score here and on a national standard, you score here.

And the difference between the test and the technology behind it may be more seamless so that some of the issues are issues that we all or you all worry about, and it's not the issue that parents and

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kids worry about in terms of reporting.

Let me say one other thing. I was at a hearing at the House Appropriations Committee in Virginia held last year on testing and Goals 2000. It was a fascinating experience in lots of ways.

But one of the things that I remember most about it was after I think it was then Board President Jim Jones and Alan Wortzel and Bill Bosher explained to the committee how good the Virginia standards are and how much of a claim they had gotten.

Several legislators asked the question, "But how do we know that they're high enough? How do they compare to what other states are doing and to what kids are expected elsewhere?"

The fact of the matter was there wasn't an answer for that. That's not a criticism. There couldn't have been an answer for that.

If Virginia or any other state participates in this testing program, they will have the kind of information that legislators and parents are ultimately asking, which is, "How do I know if my kid is doing well enough? I know what you're telling

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me in the state. Okay? But: a) I don't always understand it; b) I'm not sure I always trust it. Is there, in fact, some external reference, some external anchor, that we can look to to see whether or not the kids are doing well compared to something that most people would understand to be a recognizable accepted standard?" That's what I think this does.

Now, if it turns out that in Virginia kids do really well on the Virginia test and lousy on the national test or whatever, it probably ought to be an interesting conversation about whether our standards and our expectations are high enough or appropriate or whatever. And it ought to be a conversation.

The decision ought to be yours as to what you do about it, but I think this will spark the conversation that is important to have every place in the country and otherwise extraordinarily difficult to have any place in the country right now.

MS. REDFIELD: And I think that's maybe where Gary was going to lead us because that's where the next part came from.

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MR. PHILLIPS: No, I wasn't.

MS. REDFIELD: I don't know, Gary. But the business about if that's the case, if what Mike just said is the case, then would taking NAEP and expanding that or training it in a way that narrows for individual students' scores and interpretations be the way you're thinking about approaching it?

MR. PHILLIPS: No.

MR. COHEN: No.

MR. PHILLIPS: What we're thinking about doing is thinking about using the NAEP framework but not necessarily the NAEP test and item specifications.

MS. REDFIELD: Because?

MR. PHILLIPS: Because if you use the same test item specifications, you're re-creating NAEP again. So the idea here is to try and have a test that still preserves the integrity and the indicator nature of NAEP, still allows us to do international studies like TIMSS, and minimizes the conflicts or the corruption with those two survey systems.

So NAEP will continue as it's been doing, providing national and state data and maybe district

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data. And this other assessment is a sort of a different function, which is to provide data on the students.

And the way it will work is a new set of national tests in reading, you will get a score from that test. Then you will get a predictive or an estimated NAEP score from it, so two different scores.

In the case of math, you would get a score on that test, an estimated NAEP score, and an estimated TIMSS score. And that estimation --

MR. REIDY: Assuming all of these linking studies pan out.

MR. PHILLIPS: Right.

MS. KOPRIVA: And you're talking about there are two different tests?

MR. PHILLIPS: Just a moment. One reason why the linking study -- it's an empirical question.

One of the reasons why linking studies between states and NAEP, for example, don't always turn out is because the content is so different.

In this case, the content is virtually the same in that the framework is the same, although

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there will be some other differences that --

CHAIRMAN SMITH: Let Steve get in here.

MR. FERRARA: Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN SMITH: He's been trying to jump in.

MR. FERRARA: Thank you.

I want to make the point that I think the points that Ed and John and Doris and Ruben have raised are very important to the discussion. And I'm sure you guys are paying attention to that, guys in the generic sense.

And also the points that you've made are very important. Your choice of your giving a metaphor of firing a rifle shot in 1999 is a very apt metaphor because of the notion of that bullet flying through these various states and what it can do to us.

(Laughter.)

MR. FERRARA: So when you listen to the comments that have been made, it's very important that as this moves forward, I have no doubt in my mind that this thing is going to happen.

So what's important to us in Maryland --

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and I think you can hear it in the comments from my friends and colleagues from other states -- is what you do is going to have a huge impact on what we have been doing and breaking our backs over for several years now.

And it's real important to do it in a way so that that bullet helps us, rather than hits us and knocks us down.

CHAIRMAN SMITH: I agree completely. And so you need to hear the technical side of that thing.

MR. FERRARA: I am real eager to hear that.

CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yes. The other part being this is good because it raises a whole set of issues that we have grappled with, but we haven't heard it directly in the past.

MR. MARTIN: Mike, don't lose the perspective. Another thing that you're hearing that Steve articulated is make sure you come down on the line of supplemental, not supplanting.

What I hear suddenly from my vantage point at CCSSO, as a former Colorado state assessment

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director is I don't need a fourth grade reading test anymore at the state level because you just took it over.

CHAIRMAN SMITH: That's interesting because you're going to see that this test doesn't take over your tests when you get to the technical side. The test is going to be 90 minutes long.

MR. FISHER: You just took it over.

MS. KOPRIVA: You just took it over.

That's --

MR. POGGIO: If it's that good, why don't we want you to just do it? Why would you say, "Don't let it take it over" if it's achieving everything you're suggesting? Quite candidly, if it does, we don't need a fourth grade reading test, and we won't need --

CHAIRMAN SMITH: It's not going to have your diagnostic. It's not going to be able to deal with the scale score --

MR. POGGIO: It's not diagnostic now. Our tests are not going to --

CHAIRMAN SMITH: You don't operate, then,

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on the --

MR. POGGIO: You do, but if it's 90 minutes long, you will also at the level of: How did you do on expository texts, persuasive reading, narrative information, reading for --

MR. PHILLIPS: We're not --

CHAIRMAN SMITH: We're not going to do that.

MR. POGGIO: What are you going to test in 90 minutes? I mean, I don't mean to be critical.

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, part of it --

CHAIRMAN SMITH: There's going to be some extended response there. It won't be just multiple choice.

MS. KOPRIVA: But you can do some of that in 90 minutes. You can take out some --

MR. SHELTON: Gerry Shelton, California.

I'm waiting for the technical details, too, because what I heard Mike and Mike say is this is a very short test. This is a test producing individual scores. So we're probably not looking at a matrix design, but then it's --

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CHAIRMAN SMITH: We're definitely not.
This is individual tests.

MR. SHELTON: Right.

CHAIRMAN SMITH: There's no question
about that.

MR. SHELTON: But then I hear we're using
the NAEP frame. So the question is, then: In a
90-minute test where you're producing individual
scores, how are you covering the entire frame?

And if you are, you're covering it so
thin that I'm not sure what you're going to get out of
it, especially in terms of going back to any sort of
linking to NAEP scores as well.

MR. REIDY: Before we get onto this
technical plane, is it a fair summary of listening
comprehension? Is it a fair summary to say that the
gist of why we're doing this is to engage the nation
around some hopefully clear, understandable, important
goals in the two basic skills and to send a very clear
message that the debate is about all students learning
to some very high standards so that, really, this is
the focal point for a lot of activity around

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education? That's where this is coming from. Is that fair?

CHAIRMAN SMITH: Exactly. That's exactly it. It's better said than I said or that Mike said it.

MR. FISHER: Tom Fisher from Florida.

Go back to your last comment, Mike, 120 seconds ago. I see a distinction between you providing the opportunity for me to index my tests against national standards, as opposed to administer a test to national standards.

That's a very important distinction because Florida right now is embarking on a field test next week of its new Florida comprehensive assessment test, an investment of multi millions of dollars.

Sunshine State Standards is what we call them. It's all coordinated, K through 12. It's going to take two and a half to three hours of test administration time for reading only. And I don't quite understand how I could possibly superimpose another 90 minutes of a national test that would accomplish only one thing, and that is indexing for me

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against national standards.

Now, in some states, they may not have the same kind of thing that we are developing. They may want the national test with all of its 90 minutes, but in Florida, perhaps the solution for us is something quite different.

MR. COHEN: A couple of things. First of all, Mike was going to answer that, but he had to leave.

(Laughter.)

MR. FISHER: I can take a hint.

MR. COHEN: No, no.

MR. REIDY: We knew that, too, Mike.

MR. COHEN: Two things. First of all, I think you already have the opportunity in a way, I think, to index your new test against national standards.

That is, if you administer NAEP on a sample basis, you could at least look at the pass rate. You could look at your performance standards and NAEP performance standards and judge whether they're close or not. You've got an opportunity to do

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something like that.

MR. FISHER: Well, you see, that's why Florida has been a strong supporter of state-based participation in NAEP for all these years.

MR. COHEN: Right.

MR. FISHER: The thing that's different is that those are done on a sample of 2,500 students.

MR. COHEN: Right.

MR. FISHER: What you're proposing is something on the individual student.

MR. COHEN: That's right. But I'm saying you as the state testing administer already have an opportunity to do that kind of benchmarking, if you will.

MS. KOPRIVA: We're going to be forced to do this other one if you have that. If we have the ability to do that --

MR. COHEN: If you have the ability to do what?

MS. KOPRIVA: If we have the ability, as you say, to do that and if we trust that and if you're doing it yourselves, you're going to take a test that

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you say is different from NAEP and benchmark it to NAEP and then give it to our people, either why don't you help us figure out ways to do that with our stuff in the current NAEP --

MR. PHILLIPS: We are arguing that. For example, Kentucky did that --

MS. KOPRIVA: Right.

MR. PHILLIPS: -- several years ago. And North Carolina did it a year ago. And other states have been working on it. So that's what we're already doing.

MS. KOPRIVA: Right.

MR. COHEN: And will continue to do.

MR. PHILLIPS: And will continue to do. And in some cases we even funded some portions of it. In the case of Kentucky, we funded part of it.

MR. FISHER: But there was a certain design price to be paid under the old way of doing that that we were not willing to pay. See, we had experience in Florida doing that kind of thing going back to 1974.

We've been there. We've done that. We

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didn't like it. I was hoping that coming out of this thing would be something that had a simpler approach to it with less cost in terms of time and resources that could generate the same --

MR. PHILLIPS: But here the linking will not be done by you. It's linking done by us, funded.

And what you will get will be look-up tables or something like that that shows you what the NAEP or TIMSS score is. So that's no cost to you.

MR. FISHER: No. Cost is 90 minutes of testing time.

MR. PHILLIPS: Oh, the cost of the test itself? Right, that's correct.

MR. FISHER: See, for you to entice Florida to participate, you have to thrust it into our environment. In January we administer a writing assessment. In February we administer the new FCAT.

In the next month, in March, the districts administer their tests along with their high school graduation tests.

MR. PHILLIPS: What are you doing in April and May?

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MR. FISHER: Spring vacation. Then we have graduation ceremonies.

(Laughter.)

MR. FISHER: The point is, if I hear you correctly, up front the decision is being made that for an investment of 90 minutes of additional time at the individual student level, you will generate that kind of information.

My immediate question is wait a minute.

Students in Florida already are taking a two and a half-hour new Florida-based test. If certain things were done psychometrically to make it possible for that Florida test to be linked statistically to this same scale that you're proposing so that it's more efficient for us to do that, then that would be attractive.

MR. PHILLIPS: But, Tom, you can do that right now. As I've said, different states have done it and are doing it and plan to do it. So that's not something that we fund, but we work to make it happen, provide assistance, technical assistance.

In some cases we even used -- I think we

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used secure test items in Kentucky when we were sure that they would be monitored okay and not released.

In other cases we've used released items.

So at least a half a dozen states are already doing it right now.

MR. POGGIO: So you're suggesting the link will be from the state test and NAEP to the America reading and math tests?

MR. PHILLIPS: No. If we go with the new tests --

MR. POGGIO: The link will be national?

MR. PHILLIPS: We will do the link between the new test and NAEP. I haven't worked my way through all of this, but we will do that linking. You don't need to do anything except either administer the test, the national reading test, at which point you get all the information because we've done all the linking for you.

If you don't want to give this test, you can give your own test and do what you can do right now, which is to link it.

MR. COHEN: Ruben?

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MR. CARRIEDO: Ruben Carriedo in California.

I'd just like to know whether there's any thinking about how you're going to deal with English learners.

MR. COHEN: You mean limited English proficiencies?

MR. CARRIEDO: Yes, whether there's any commitment to have them to be a part of this assessment.

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes, there is a commitment. And the plan is to have several things. One is some inclusion criteria, essentially worked out through the RFP process and also accommodation for students' disabilities. And what those accommodations are, we have to work those out.

Now, in the case of reading and English, it's not a reading test. It's reading English. There will not be a Spanish version and things like that.

What we would do in math is a different story, and that still has to be worked out. But there is a strong commitment on the part of the Department.

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You know, there's a big emphasis on inclusion. NAEP spent a lot of money doing studies on this back in '96 and will continue in 1998. And so there's a strong emphasis to do that.

Generally I think it will probably be worked out by whatever the school is willing to provide is something we would accept. But all those details still need to be worked out. We don't have those down here.

Once we get the RFP on the street, I think the larger consensus process can be developed and those discussions and debates can happen.

MS. KOPRIVA: Let's do the technical.

MR. PHILLIPS: We do have one other little constraint. Mike is leaving in like a half an hour.

(Laughter.)

MR. REIDY: You only have one in technical, though, Mike.

MR. COHEN: Why don't you put the technical -- I mean, you know not to ask me technical questions.

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MS. KOPRIVA: But the technical is the basic design, I think.

MR. COHEN: Then why don't I just stay as long as anyone else has any nontechnical questions that someone from the White House can appropriately deal with. And when you run out of those, I'll be happy to stop. If that takes five minutes, rather than a half-hour, that's not a problem for me.

But I just want to deal with any questions that are more in my province than Gary's, basically. And if you've run out of those, that's all right.

MR. SHELTON: Mike, we talked about the national test not supplanting in any way. But is that going to be a battle that has to be fought at budget time, for example?

MR. COHEN: I don't think so. I think we have some -- first of all, the cost of developing the test itself is not a huge cost. The biggest budget item for us is the President's commitment, at least for 1999, to pay for the cost of administering the test so that you all aren't in a position of having to

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choose between this test and your test, at least on cost grounds.

In terms of the appropriations process, that's pretty far down the road from now. My guess is if there are a large number of states that have signed up and said they want to do it, that the politics of the appropriations will take care of itself. If there are not a large number of states that are committed to doing this, it will be a different kind of discussion.

But in the context of the overall Education Department budget, I don't think -- and a very strong commitment to this and I think by the way a very, very strong national consensus that this kind of testing and these kinds of standards are, in fact, what people want.

I think it is not going to be extraordinarily difficult to get the support to do this without jeopardizing other related testing and R&D items in the Department's budget. And that's the basis on which we're going to proceed.

Yes?

MS. KOPRIVA: Rebecca Kopriva, Delaware.

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I guess what I'd like to say is I think what I'd like you to take back to the White House or wherever is that you need to understand that by putting this out there, we cannot deviate from it.

As states, we would be foolish to have a test if, in fact, we have another test wrapped around it or had a test separate from it or anything other than having your test.

We can't afford to have our test be significantly different than yours, even if we think it's significantly better, because this will drive -- this is going to drive a lot of what we're doing. And it won't only drive it in four and eight.

It's going to drive it throughout the years because they're going to gear to four and eight.

So just be aware of that. On one hand, this is exactly what Ed said, and that's true. That's a positive spin. But the other side of the coin is this. So we're ending up with a denominator that for some of us may not be as high as what we had hoped.

MR. FERRARA: That's already happened. You mentioned Mark Musick's report.

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MR. COHEN: Right.

MR. FERRARA: That little table that you have on that one sheet of paper is causing a great deal of debate and anxiety in Maryland and I guess in other states. We have to be able to explain that to people.

And it doesn't matter what recommendation we make. It's not satisfactory. The national tests are going to exacerbate that problem. So it's not only that the test objectives are going to influence what we do. It's performance of the national test and how that differs from what's going on in the state assessments.

MS. KOPRIVA: That's what I'm talking about.

MR. FERRARA: That's Mike Smith's bullet.

MR. COHEN: Right. But think about it for a second. In Maryland you already have the problem of not being able to explain to parents how well their kids are doing on tests; right?

MR. FERRARA: You.

MR. COHEN: Okay. I mean, you've got a

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problem before this came. But your board thinks this is a solution to the problem.

MR. FERRARA: Yes. I'm not arguing against the national test. I'm reinforcing the point that what you guys do, guys in the generic sense -- I'm sorry -- what all of you do, what OERI does, --

MR. COHEN: Right.

MR. FERRARA: -- we have to figure out how to do that so that it works in concert with what we're already doing. We already know there are some conflicts between NAEP and state assessment. And it's going to get worse or more difficult to deal with.

MR. COHEN: That's a fair point. There's sort of a delicate balance I think we have to try to walk here. On the one hand, particularly for those of you who are actually here, you come from states that have been out in front, that have done very good work, that have kind of led the way for the rest of the country. And we ought not do this in a way that jeopardizes what you have accomplished, the strengths that you have made.

MS. KOPRIVA: Right. That's an important

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point.

MR. COHEN: Well, that's why I said it.

But there's another important point also. The President has said this any number of times as he has talked about this. In effect, we have been pretending that there are dramatically different approaches to reading and math around the country, that states and local school boards, in fact, decide the content in meaningful ways.

And behind that fig leaf of governance issues, the fact of the matter is we have widely varying standards around the country. We hold kids to widely varying expectations. Okay?

And parents and kids have no accurate, reliable information about how well they're doing against standards that reflect what they're going to be held to once they leave school.

And that is at least a big a problem as the ones that we have been focusing on. And I think we have to move forward in a way that points the country in the right direction that begins to get very honest with parents and kids about what's expected of

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the kids and what levels of performance the kids are reaching and do that in a way that strengthens and supports and doesn't screw up the efforts of leading states that have really been trying to address that.

But it is certainly not the case that if you brought every state in the country around this table that they would all be models of how to do this and that uniformly, no matter where you live in the country, you would know that if you sent a kid to school, they would be benefitting from high expectations.

And that is a real national problem that we're trying to address.

MR. MARTIN: But, Mike, you've got to consider what are the strengths here. I mean, go back for a minute. If I'm going to take 3 hours in Colorado to assess a fourth grader in reading and I'm going to participate in the NAEP state assessment of reading so that some of those 100 schools are going to give me another -- what, Gary, 90 minutes, an hour and a half, 2 hours per kid? -- then I'm going to add another 90 minutes for an individual reading score on

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the national test at a time when I'm hearing administrators, teachers tell me, "Stop taking all this time away from instruction with your assessments," I mean, let's get real. Let's stop and think. What is it we want to do?

If we accept some of your premises, -- and we do; we believe in them -- do we want to say, "Well, maybe we want to rethink fourth grade reading"?

Maybe there shouldn't be a state NAEP or a national NAEP of fourth grade reading because this covers it. Maybe we should look at: Is that an option at eighth grade level?

We can't continue to take more and more student time. Illinois has a law that says during a student's K-12 education, you can have a maximum of 24 hours, -- is it? -- I believe, for state assessment.

If Illinois participates in this as a state, they're giving up an hour and a half of that time. It's three hours of they do it at fourth --

MS. REDFIELD: And, you know, it's not the 90 minutes. I mean, 90 minutes really in the big scope of things doesn't sound like a lot, but it's the

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train. It's like how all of instruction just kind of focuses on what it is that's going to be assessed.

So it's not only the 90 minutes. It's all that goes with it. And I'm thinking that, too, it kind of retreats back to the old and continuing debate about some states are going to be worried that the bar is not high enough and it's going to jeopardize where they want to go. Others are going to be worried that it's too high and they won't look as good as they want to look.

But erase all of that and say, "Look, here's the given. This is what's going to happen."

Then I think your issue of how do we find the balance that's going to work and reduce the burden of testing on kids is what we really need to focus on.

MR. CARRIEDO: I guess the point I would like to make that's related to this discussion is when we look at our assessment policy in the District, -- and we have such a thing -- we have it articulated so that it includes a national strand.

And if we participate and California participates, it's going to mean rejuggling. We're

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going to have to rethink. California is going to have to rethink it at the state level. We're going to have to rethink it at our level. And we're going to have to make some choices.

And I hope that there will be some rethinking, even at the national level, that we're not going to do everything exactly the same as we have done in the past and do another layer because it won't be received well.

MR. COHEN: Ed?

MR. REIDY: I'm anxious to move on to the details. To me, there's no question that we need a national focus, a national debate, lots of discussion on how we're going to improve schools for kids, lots of kids, poor kids as well as all kinds of other kinds, because we're not now doing the job that I believe we need to do.

So there's some down side to this, some real down side potential to this. There's also some real up side potential to this. I ask teachers, I ask staff every day to look at the odds and take a chance.

I don't think we can do any less than

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this. I think all we want you to be is aware of both the down side and the up side. And I think all of us would like to work with you to make sure that we enhance the likelihood that it has more positive effect than negative effect.

MS. KOPRIVA: That's the main thing.

MR. COHEN: I appreciate that. And let me just say in return, I mean, we didn't enter this approach lightly. Those of us who have been through the last four years of battles about national standards and national goals and all of those other things thought long and hard about whether this was something to take on.

I know my life would have been easier if we had said, "Hell, leave it to the states. It will be just fine." Okay? That was my first instinct.

(Laughter.)

MR. COHEN: You want to do what? So both in terms of the sort of macro politics of this as well as in terms of that delicate balance of federal effort, national effort, state and local effort, et cetera, this wasn't entered into without an awful lot

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of thought and consideration, both here in the Department and in the White House.

We chose a very focused approach; right?

Two subject areas, two grade levels. Okay. And they were chosen deliberately for educationally sound reasons, I think. So we're not trying to cover the waterfront. And we're trying to do this in a way that we hope can fit with and strengthen what you're trying to do, rather than screw up what you're trying to do.

We know this can't succeed without your help. I'm not yet as confident as you all sound that this is a done deal. I mean, when you're on my end, you're trying to make it happen, this thing to go from where we are to the conclusion you've reached looks longer to me now than it does to you. But I certainly hope your reading of this is right.

We're not going to get there without your help. We're not going to get there unless we can work together to really kind of balance what we're trying to do with what you've got to do, which is sort of live in the real world in which tests are developed and administered and scored and deal with all the

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issues that you're talking about.

I talked with the President about this yesterday. And I know that he's hoping that we can get from you the kind of advice and help that we need to be able to make this workable, not just for these big reasons, although the big reasons are pretty important, but so that they'll work in a real practical sense.

So I hope that this is the opening of the dialogue. I hope that you can get to the technical issues soon so maybe some of the questions you have will get answered or that you'll have some things that we need to be listening to and thinking about as we proceed.

We've got a really good team here at the Department able to carry this forward. And I hope that you can give them all the help that they together need.

MR. FERRARA: Mike, nobody is more eager to hear the technical details that Gary is going to present than I am. That's especially true when you consider how far I've traveled today.

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(Laughter.)

MR. FERRARA: But I hope that either you or Gary will tell us what it means to say we'll be working together on this. I know you're committed to it. I'm hoping, if not today, very soon we'll hear some details of what that means.

MR. COHEN: This is a start of it. And the people you need to work with are the people here in the Department and in NCES. I'm going to let them answer the rest of the --

MR. FERRARA: Okay.

MR. COHEN: The last thing you want to do is have highly technical conversations with the people that I work with.

MR. FERRARA: Yes. I don't mean --

MR. COHEN: Not that they're not really great psychometricians, but that's not where our expertise is.

MR. FISHER: If I may ask a policy question?

MR. COHEN: Yes.

MR. FISHER: This is Tom Fisher from

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Florida.

Do you folks conceive that once this thing is in place, there will no longer be a need for the state-based NAEP assessments that we have done since 1990?

And, secondly, have you considered how this initiative impacts the current discussions on the restructuring of NAEP that NAGB has undertaken?

MR. COHEN: With regard to the first, I think it's a fair question. That is, what would be the impact of -- if this works, if this happens, will there still be a need for state-based NAEP?

I honestly don't know the answer to that. I think, you know, it's not hard to spin out the arguments on either side of that. But I think we've got some time to answer that.

I think there's a test to be developed. I think there are decisions to be made in states, about whether and how to participate. And I think as that unfolds, it will be a whole lot easier to answer the question about state NAEP in a context that reflects the reality, rather than some projections.

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My own sense is that ought to be held in abeyance for a while. There's a reauthorization coming up. That's a good context in which to talk about it. This process that we're talking about today will have moved a little bit further along. And I think there will be an opportunity to consider it.

I wouldn't want to rush to a judgment about that right now myself. And I would not want to proceed on the assumption that we're going to change the trajectory that NAEP is on.

I think state NAEP and the redesigned NAEP ought to proceed. We ought to be looking at what the implications of this are. But things ought to proceed along. They shouldn't slow down at this point.

MR. POGGIO: This is John Poggio.

We've spent a fair amount of time giving consideration to the development cycle and what it looks like and how it comprehends what we're doing.

I want to take it to the other extreme, the policy point of view, which is what the government sees as the consequences.

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How have you begun to think about: When a child fails, does poorly, what is the position the agency is going to be as to what should happen, not your immediate response, but your long-term considerations as to where this invariably leads, grade to grade promotion tests, directed instruction? How does it play out?

MR. COHEN: I think those are issues that are not federal issues. Those are issues that you folks need to worry about at the state level and at the local level.

MR. POGGIO: Well, they're federal issues insofar as test design questions and whether or not you'll be willing to stand behind states or districts or localities that take certain actions.

MR. COHEN: You mean if you use this test as a basis of promotion?

MR. POGGIO: Sure.

MR. COHEN: If the question there is "Will this meet the technical criteria" --

MR. POGGIO: Right.

MR. COHEN: -- "necessary for that?";

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Gary, you'll deal with that one. I mean, I'm really not the person to answer that.

MR. POGGIO: I welcome the directive. You say let it stand for that. You're saying yes or no to that consideration. That has phenomenal implications for design development costs, management of the program.

MR. PHILLIPS: Part of the development process is going -- there are a number of things that the contractor will need to deal with. One will be -- and we'll be working with the contractor -- the appropriate uses of the test. We will have guidelines. And maybe in some cases we will not allow certain uses of the test.

That has to be worked out. It's not been worked out yet. My assumption of the way this would work is once we zero in on the uses, then we need to provide validity data that tests may be designed for that use.

So that's all part of the plan, but I don't know the uses today. I mean, I have some general ideas, but I don't want to get into them. I

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think that that has to be worked out, again, through a national consensus process.

MR. POGGIO: So we're going forward with development without a clear understanding as to how it might be.

MR. PHILLIPS: It will be one of the first things that we'll deal with.

MR. POGGIO: I have another related policy question as to consequences. And that is we know we can build sound tests, state-of-the-art stuff, but the intervention here is not the testing.

It's the instruction that goes on. So, from a policy point of view, when states or schools, localities are doing poorly, what are the interventions of federal government, since it's the designer and actor of these things, that will come forward to help schools or are you left on your own at that point, "Well, take the data and do something with it. Good luck. We know you need to do better with tests coming back next year"?

MR. COHEN: Well, we provide a significant amount of money for Title I. We provide

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a significant amount of money for Eisenhower. I mean, there's a significant and growing federal investment.

And we have been fighting for a growing federal investment in programs that can improve teaching and learning.

And it seems to me that's what our job is. I don't think our job is to design specific interventions for specific schools or for specific states, for that matter, if the performance is low. That's your job to do.

We can provide the resources and overall framework that gives you flexibility to use those resources to support your own approach to raising the test scores, but we provide the resources. You provide the sort of brain power and the work to know how to do that, in effect.

MR. POGGIO: If some people are going to be successful with this and others, it seems to me even a half step that would suggest we can identify exemplary locations where performance is strong and let people become aware of those things. Those are limited cost options.

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MR. COHEN: Right. Those are the kinds of things that OERI and other offices in the Department try to do generally, identify effective practices and effective approaches. And that's something that I would expect we would continue; in fact, we would like to see you do more of.

MR. POGGIO: I would hope that we can spend the next few weeks, months, whatever giving lots of attention to what comes of all of this, rather than saying, "Well, it's sort of in your bailiwick."

MR. COHEN: Again, there's a real balance here. We've spent the last four years, though not everyone in the world believes this, we've spent the last four years, trying to make federal programs more flexible, more adaptive, more easy for states and localities to use in their own fashion and to basically underscore the fact that the primary responsibility lies at the state and local level.

This test isn't going to change that. This test isn't the first step in a grand escalation of federal responsibility for K to 12 education. These tests will provide a different kind of

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information that's available to parents and kids around the country than they get now, but the responsibility for educating the kids doesn't change as a result of the development of this test.

MS. DAVIS: My name is Jennifer Davis. I work in the Secretary's office. We do a lot of work with state and local elected officials.

Our whole emphasis leading up to 1999 in the purpose of the major new investment in some of our education programs and in America Reads and getting the information about TIMSS out -- and Mike Timpane is here with us, who is going to be helping us with that -- is to help do exactly what you're saying, to provide better information about model programs that are working, share more information across the states than we are right now, the exemplary practices, not only their assessments, of course, but just across all of the gamut, particularly math and reading, but across the other studies, too.

Joe Conaty in OERI and a group of us from across the agency are working together to really focus in on that, and I think it's critical. That's why

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between now and 1999 it's just going to be a very important time frame.

MR. POGGIO: I just think we ought to be out front with those things, not to say that you haven't been.

MS. DAVIS: Right.

MR. POGGIO: But a top item that says not only are we bringing you, the rod, we're also bringing you, the carrot.

MS. DAVIS: Exactly.

MR. POGGIO: That would go a long way.

There's just one last thing about the policy. I mean, you keep saying, "Well, we're here to help," but I want to underscore something I said a moment ago. What gets tested is what will be taught.

And you're saying we're not controlling American curriculum. All of us here will sit and tell you what we put on those booklets is what gets the attention of teachers.

You are altering what is going to be taught. You need to be aware of that.

MR. COHEN: If you choose to use the

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test.

MR. POGGIO: Rebecca said earlier we're not going to have a choice. I mean, this is a Hobson's choice, where we're damned if we do, and we're damned if we don't.

I'm not saying it's a bad thing. Please don't misunderstand me. If this test is designed and none of us --

(Laughter.)

MR. POGGIO: We're just a microcosm of what you are. We do the same thing to our constituents. We create a test. We have discussions like this. People want to know: Why are you asking those questions?

We say to them -- what the point of this program was, I say the same thing when I'm out before the public in Kansas. We are here to help all kids. We are setting high standards so that all children can learn.

MR. FERRARA: You know, Bob --

MR. COHEN: So you're just enjoying the shoe being on the other foot.

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(Laughter.)

MR. COHEN: I now have a better understanding of the dynamics --

MR. FERRARA: Isn't it kind of embarrassing to be acting like the people --

MR. SHELTON: The best part about it is we know the conversations they're going to have.

(Laughter.)

MR. POGGIO: But the reason we are successful and the reason we want you to hear us is because we have worked with those constituencies to provide the test they want, not the test I want, so creating systems that allow for assessments that truly reflect what supports the states.

I look at that chart. And my question is not somebody is wrong here. I look at that chart from the Washington Post and say we have states that are doing different things and evaluating different things than the nation is.

We can't have that with a test like this. You should be able to supplant most of what we do with a 90-minute reading test. If you don't,

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something is wrong.

MR. COHEN: That's a fair point.

MR. SHELTON: The other part of this --
Gerry Shelton, California.

The other part of this is the more that this model moves to local control, the more that you don't want to mandate things down to the states -- I'm going ahead of Gary here and flipping through some of his overheads, where the test reporting strategies are local options, scoring by the licensee, which is the state or the district, those sorts of things.

At some point that shifting the responsibilities to the locals then interferes with the philosophy of the national test because at some point you start getting to where this is not a national test, where it's scored a little bit differently in different places and it's reported a little bit differently and it's used differently in different places. And that's in potential conflict with what this is trying to do.

MR. REIDY: Mike, you finished a major survey this year with TIMSS in which you had a whole

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bunch of topics that somebody agreed across the world were appropriate topics for seventh and eighth grade mathematics.

So you know right now from a sample of teachers throughout this country the extent to which we have agreement, at least in the eyes of teachers, on what's important.

I'd like to know how that agreement -- first of all, I haven't seen that data yet. That may be because I haven't downloaded that one report. You've got a lot of them.

But I'd like to know the extent to which there's agreement between what teachers said in those surveys and with the NAEP framework that we currently have.

It's an empirical question. To what extent do we agree, at least do teachers agree, that this is what we should be spending our time on? And this is the emphasis it should be getting.

I'm assuming now, as they say, this is what they've done and they believe they should be doing. That may be a false assumption.

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MR. PHILLIPS: Are you familiar with the study, the curriculum study, in the TIMSS?

MR. REIDY: Yes. It's a teacher questionnaire.

MR. PHILLIPS: Gene, do you have any comments on that or not and the answers?

MR. OWEN: Just that there's a wide variety that was used.

MR. CONATY: They can't hear you. You have to step up so the mikes will pick you up. And identify yourself.

MR. OWEN: I'm Gene Owen from the National Center for Educational Statistics and with the International Programs.

There is quite a bit of agreement about what they're teaching. The notion is they're teaching a lot of things. And the problem is that there's agreement on the range of things, but there's nothing really in-depth that they're teaching if you look at a national aggregate.

So if you look at the content that the NAEP framework covers and the TIMSS framework covers,

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in a rough sense, there's a very big overlap between those two contexts. So if you're saying the TIMSS content is covered by what teachers say they're teaching, there is an agreement with what's going on in NAEP.

The difficulty is with TIMSS, it seems that what the world is teaching at eighth grade is what we're teaching at seventh grade. That doesn't mean that there's not agreement about the content coverage. It's just the level and some of the specific features of the way they were taught.

So I think there is a good consensus that what's in these frameworks is what's being taught among the teachers from the comparative study.

MR. PHILLIPS: I want to thank Mike Cohen for stopping by. I hope you feel better now.

MS. KOPRIVA: It felt great.

(Laughter.)

MR. COHEN: I'm sorry that I was the person standing between you all and the --

(Laughter.)

MR. PHILLIPS: Okay. I'll go to the

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second bullet now.

(Laughter.)

MR. PHILLIPS: I will go through this rather quickly. Many of you know this sort of thing. So it's not like it's new information for you.

So it will be reading and math. Those will provide national standards. And the math will also provide international standards. How we do this is a different question, but this is the goal.

Items will be released to the public every year. So there will be a window of administration. At the end of that window, items, scoring guide, and things like that can go onto the World Wide Web. And it's available to the general public.

MR. REIDY: The entire test, Gary?

MR. PHILLIPS: The entire test, the whole thing. The first administration will be scheduled in 1999. We've narrowed that down to April-May of 1999.

So I don't know what the window will be. It's not going to be two months. It might be like a week or two weeks, something like that, but it will be

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sometime in April or May. The budgeting and other plans are assuming that that's the case.

MR. POGGIO: This may sound very simple. You need to understand that in a rural state like ours, May is nonviable. You really have to target April.

MR. PHILLIPS: I understand. And, you know, again, what we might do is we will look at this. We did the same thing in NAEP. There was no time that all the states agreed. In every case, no matter what time you chose, it was critically important you not choose that date for at least one state. So that just happens. But the --

MR. POGGIO: But as the calendar works, it would be the equivalent of the Midwest suggesting that the testing take place in late August-September and every East Coast and West Coast state would say, "Are you crazy?" It's not a small matter but precedent.

MR. PHILLIPS: These are the general prior decisions. Let's see what we're going to be doing now. And when I say "prior decisions," I mean

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these are nonnegotiable.

MR. CARRIEDO: Are there so many days of instruction that should have occurred?

MR. PHILLIPS: Are there so many days of what?

MR. CARRIEDO: Instruction that should have occurred before the test is administered in that school year.

MR. PHILLIPS: You know, again, that might be part of the criteria we'll use.

MR. CARRIEDO: You have to factor in the year-round schedule.

MR. PHILLIPS: Okay. What's the basic idea here? Okay. First, the test is voluntary. That is in the sense that no one is required to take it.

It will be put out there as a product and service by government, and it can be used by states, schools, and test publishers. But it's completely voluntary.

No individually identifiable data from the test is given back to the federal government. So we get nothing back. We get no information back from schools, districts, or states.

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The only information that we would get would be the same thing that everybody would get, like if you do a report of some sort, we can get a copy of that report, but we get no data files, no data sets, nothing. Once the test is out there, it's used in a certain period of time. Then it's released to the public, and that's it.

And, by the way, with our releasing it to the public, what we hope is that parents can look at it, homeschoolers can use it. I mean, you could use it for a variety of reasons once it's out there. So there's a whole bunch of potential uses that you can have with the test once it's released.

MR. SHELTON: Gary?

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes?

MR. SHELTON: So there would be no national aggregation?

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes, there would, but that's part of the test development and learning activities. That is transparent to the user. I'll get to that in just a moment.

There are a certain number of studies

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that we'll be doing, funding by the government. By the way, I need to mention one other thing, too.

By the way, I need to mention one other thing, too. Somebody mentioned earlier this is not a n NCES activity. I know you people who know me know that I'm in NCES, but I am half-time detailed to OERI. And I'm functioning here as an OERI staff person.

The bulk of the contract, 95 percent of it, or the contracts will be administered through, currently we're thinking, OERI. There might be a small piece, which is the linking to NAEP and TIMSS, that might be handled by NCES, but that's still not clear.

MS. KOPRIVA: Is what we're going to get national norms or norms from the states that volunteer?

MR. PHILLIPS: National norms.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION OF TECHNICAL ISSUES

MR. PHILLIPS: Okay. We will make the test consistent with the joint technical standards. As you know, they are being revised now. And, assuming that the revisions are available in time for

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this activity, we will comply with those new standards.

We will have inclusion criteria and appropriate accommodations, which I mentioned earlier.

This is a major commitment on our part. And we intend to go forward with that. We have a lot of research in NAEP and other places that will help guide us as to what to do.

One design feature here is that we're going to have parallel forms from year to year. And, if you want, I can even draw a picture of the field testing and that sort of thing. But here we're in the equation business, not in the linking business.

So this is like the SAT or the ACT or tests that you try to keep parallel, equated from year to year. This is what we're doing. And part of the field test design is to field test the number of forms in prior years. And I'll go over them in just a moment.

We also want to report in a metric that is easily understood by parents and teachers. That means we probably don't want to score like in a scale

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score of 320. No one knows what that means. We'll probably choose a metric like percent correct or a domain score, which is on the zero to 100 scale, something like that.

Now, the statistical work might be done in a different metric, but when we get finished, it will be expressed in a metric that parents feel they understand and can relate to.

MR. REIDY: Gary, are you going to report against the standard?

MR. PHILLIPS: What we will have will be a -- let's say in the national test for reading, there will be a domain score from zero to 100. Let's say you get 75 percent on the test. There will be another score, which will be an estimated NAEP score. And there there will be a standard on the NAEP.

We're not anticipating setting standards on the test. Who knows what might happen later on down the road? At the present time, the standard that you get on this test will be the NAEP, the NAEP estimate, or in the case of math and, in addition, in the case of math, there would be a TIMSS estimate,

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which is an international standard.

MR. CARRIEDO: But don't take us backwards. We've been working hard to try to educate our public about standards and how you report scores and how that's different from what we've done in the past. So, I mean, this is a very important issue.

MR. PHILLIPS: How is this taking you backwards? I thought it was taking us forward.

MR. SHELTON: Like, for example, the reporting you're saying correct.

MR. PHILLIPS: On the metric, you mean?

MR. SHELTON: Yes.

MR. PHILLIPS: Oh, I don't know what the metric is. I didn't mean to imply that it was definitely. I would think, for example, the domain score would be my only choice. And if you use percent correct, you're really wedded to those raw scores.

Then that's a big problem. So those will all have to be worked out, but it will be in some -- the commitment is that it will be in some metric that parents naturally understand.

MR. REIDY: I understand. Wait a second.

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We heard earlier today a great emphasis on all kids can learn to this high standard. We have this high standard in reading. We have this high standard in math.

I'm kind of aghast that you're telling me that we won't be reporting against that standard on this test.

MR. PHILLIPS: The current plan is to not have a standard on this test. That could change.

MR. REIDY: Why?

MR. PHILLIPS: Because you have access to NAEP, you can project it right on the NAEP scale.

MR. REIDY: What's the standard on NAEP?

MR. PHILLIPS: Basic, proficient, advanced.

MR. REIDY: But what is the standard towards which we believe all kids can learn?

MR. PHILLIPS: Oh, are you saying: Should we choose proficient or basic or --

MR. REIDY: That's a big choice.

MR. PHILLIPS: Of course, but I don't have that decision today, what standard we're going to

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recommend that this country will shoot for.

MR. REIDY: I guess what I'm asking is when you report a score to parents, you can report a scale score. You can report a percentile rank. You could report a percent correct. You can also report whether or not this youngster, my youngster, has reached the standard that we say we're setting.

MR. PHILLIPS: That's right.

MR. REIDY: And if you're not talking about reporting that, then I have grave --

MR. PHILLIPS: We are talking about reporting that. But at this point, the standard that's set is not on this new test. It's a standard that has been set on NAEP. What we're doing is projecting to the NAEP scale to get that standard.

MS. REDFIELD: I think you are talking two different things. You're talking level. He's talking standard. He's saying: Which of those levels is good enough for kids to reach? Is basic good enough or does Mikey have to be proficient?

MR. PHILLIPS: And there will be recommendations on that. I don't know what they are

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today, though.

MR. FEINBERG: The other message in the background material, the President did say --

MR. PHILLIPS: He chose basic, right.

MR. FEINBERG: -- at fourth grade reading, all children should read at the basic level. And then it says many more children should reach the proficient level.

MR. PHILLIPS: That's right.

MR. FEINBERG: And that was issued a couple of weeks ago by President Clinton. He said that. He sort of chose that.

And then for eighth grade, he said all children should reach the international average on TIMSS, and many more children should reach the 90th percentile, should be in the top 10 percent. He didn't mention NAEP in the eighth grade, but he did mention TIMSS in the eighth grade.

MR. POGGIO: I want to comment about linking this and imputing it from NAEP. You said a moment ago that --

MR. PHILLIPS: It's not imputing. It's

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projecting.

MR. POGGIO: Projecting, yes, or forecasting. What it is not is a direct equate. What we have is NAEP and the national test conceivably tapping at different constructs. And it seems to me with as much time as you have, why wouldn't you want to set independent standards, judgment points, hurdles, call them what you will, on this test?

MR. FERRARA: You set standards.

MR. POGGIO: Sure.

MR. FERRARA: It would be impossible to set them.

MR. POGGIO: Well, what I'm saying is it's done for NAEP. And what we're saying is we're ignoring the oversights of the NAEP process when it's been criticized, not that they exist any longer, but why not set your own standards going in?

MR. MARTIN: Because they don't want to have different standards than NAEP has.

MR. POGGIO: But we're marking children; right? And we're concerned about two tests yielding different decision points potentially. We're okay in

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saying about the child, "Well, that's all right. Don't worry. We know there's error in the measurement."

I don't know. It strikes me standard setting links itself directly to the validity question. And we shouldn't ignore that. I don't know how you have as the second or third principle we're going to follow AERA, APA standards and not be so concerned about the decision point.

MR. CARRIEDO: Gary, we have a lot to say about this issue.

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, the issue of setting standards on this particular test, that's not part of the commitment to this moment. How that develops over the next two years, I do not know. At this point, the standard we're planning to get is from the NAEP assessment.

MS. REDFIELD: One of the dilemmas we have is that right now from a federal perspective, it's voluntary. From the state perspective, whether it's voluntary or not, it's not voluntary.

And, therefore, we may have a need for

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standards and applied consequences that were not intended by the studies that were done to demonstrate the validity of the task for federal purposes.

MS. KOPRIVA: Yes.

MR. REIDY: Well, one of the problems I'm foreseeing right now is I listen to that statement clearly. The basic level in reading is the standard.

MS. KOPRIVA: Is the standard.

MR. REIDY: Well, that is not the standard in Kentucky. And what you're doing is lowering the standard. The national standard will be lower than the state standard. And we're going to have a very different problem than what you were talking about with that newspaper article now.

Our citizens have looked at that standard. I mean, we have had people come in and look at it. They feel that's the right standard. But now in the presence of a federal initiative that says, "It's okay. We'll be happy if kids are lower," please think that through because the idea is not to lower standards, is not to bring us down, I didn't think, but to bring all of us up.

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And if we're taking or the government is taking the basic standard as the standard, it may be realistic in the short term, but it is lower than a lot of our standards.

MR. CARRIEDO: The New York Times article this morning did that, basic reporting, basic as the same.

MR. FEINBERG: I wish Mike Cohen were here. I don't see his presence at all.

(Laughter.)

MR. FEINBERG: It wasn't just one standard. In effect, he offered for both reading and math two standards. And he said we should aspire that all students should reach the basic level in fourth grade reading and that many more should reach proficient. And I don't think he meant that basic was sufficient.

And the same with the math, international average. Many more should be in the top ten percent. The top ten percent and efficient are probably quite nice standards.

MS. KOPRIVA: But, see --

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MR. FEINBERG: Clinton himself didn't just say the one standard. I think if Mike Cohen were here, he would say they weren't just saying the one.

MS. KOPRIVA: That's certainly true. It's just that that's the rhetoric that we all used when we did the minimum competency thing.

MR. PHILLIPS: I don't think you should think that this is the last word on this issue: What is the standard? I think as time goes by, things have a way of adjusting themselves. But that's where we are today.

MR. CARRIEDO: Does NAEP framework include NCTM? I mean --

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes.

MR. CARRIEDO: Okay.

MR. PHILLIPS: It's heavily invested, a huge match between the NAEP framework and NCTM.

MR. CARRIEDO: If we could have those references, it would be helpful.

MR. PHILLIPS: It will be on the Web within a week, the frameworks. In fact, they're already on the NAGB Web site. What we're going to do

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is provide a link between ours and that link so you can go directly to it. And you will be able to download both the reading NAEP, the math NAEP, and the TIMSS framework.

MR. CARRIEDO: I just wanted a reference to the National Council of Teachers that has been working on the consensus standards.

MR. PHILLIPS: They are listed in the framework.

MR. CARRIEDO: Okay.

MR. PHILLIPS: Okay. The plan is to have a NAEP framework with a different item of test specifications. It will be linked to NAEP and TIMSS, provide a reading and math score plus a predicted NAEP score in reading and math and a predicted TIMSS score in math, up to 90 minutes of testing time. It says, "up to," which means it could be less. Again, this is something that needs to be worked out that, in part, depends on the item specifications.

Approximately 80 percent of the items will be multiple choice. That says "approximately."

So it could be a little more, it could be a little

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less.

Twenty percent constructed response, and we like to include at least one extended constructed response. If we do that, our estimates are about half the time would be spent on both types of items.

Yes?

MS. KOPRIVA: Gary? I just sat there and was playing around with that. That means if it's about 90 minutes and 45 minutes of multiple choice, that means I assume you're going to do about 40 multiple choice, which means you're going to do 10 open-ended, which means you have 45 minutes to do 10 open-ended, which is about an average of 4 and a half minutes for open-ended.

Those kinds of open-ended, are those really the kind of open-ended you're going to be using? Those are the .7 correlation of multiple choice.

MR. PHILLIPS: There are two types of open-ended. One would be short constructed response, and one would be an extended constructed response.

MS. KOPRIVA: Yes.

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MR. PHILLIPS: One item.

MS. KOPRIVA: Okay. Then the other ones would be two and a half minutes. And that's a .8 correlation of multiple choice.

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, you might know that. I don't know. I don't know where you're getting these correlations. We don't --

MR. POGGIO: You could shorten the multiple choice. And so it wouldn't correlate as well.

(Laughter.)

MS. KOPRIVA: All I'm saying is that while ten open-ended sounds like a lot, the kinds of open-ended that you use make a dramatic difference in really the depth that you're going to get.

MR. PHILLIPS: Right.

MS. KOPRIVA: All I'm doing is playing out what you have written up there. And that's what concerns me.

MR. PHILLIPS: This is another one of those issues where every time we have a meeting there's a whole different -- the last time we had a

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meeting, the people wanted to take all open-ended off and just use multiple choice. It would be irresponsible if we didn't do that.

MS. KOPRIVA: Who were those people?

(Laughter.)

MR. PHILLIPS: There you go. At this point --

MS. KOPRIVA: Who might those be?

MR. POGGIO: What kind of specification are you looking at for a constructed response? Is it right? Are you anticipating three, four, five-minute responses to the series?

MR. PHILLIPS: Again, that needs to be worked out. I'm assuming it's about right, but, again, this is an indicator test.

MR. POGGIO: Sure.

MR. PHILLIPS: It's not going to have the same depth of -- it's not going to be like a six-month portfolio study or something like that.

MS. KOPRIVA: And I'm not suggesting this. I'm not asking for a six-month portfolio study.

MR. PHILLIPS: I'm exaggerating a little

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bit.

MS. KOPRIVA: But you understand -- when you put out that kind of a test, that kind of a test with that kind of level of depth of open-ended items, then do you understand that none of us can deviate from that in all the other hours that we have to do our testing.

And so what you're saying is that becomes the standard for the kinds of items essentially that we build. We can't deviate a whole lot from that.

MR. REIDY: Sure, we can.

MS. KOPRIVA: Not a whole lot.

MR. POGGIO: Could you distinguish between your use of the word "constructed" response and "extended" constructed response --

MR. PHILLIPS: Right.

MR. POGGIO: -- in terms of time?

MR. PHILLIPS: I can't tell you time because I don't know the answer, but a short constructed response would be one where you might write a word or a sentence or draw a graph or something like that.

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An extended constructed response is where you would write a paragraph, a page, or might draw a series of graphs, something like that. So it would take longer and would probably involve reading an authentic passage of some sort, something like that.

MR. POGGIO: I really didn't want to encourage you to think about fewer extended response questions, which will get at the depths of some of the things.

The other thing is just a multiple choice knock-off. I mean, it's a fill in the blank. If you're going to have 90 minutes and 45 can be committed to constructed response, why not 3 at the extended type of 15 minutes apiece, where there's some development?

MR. PHILLIPS: The mix has to be worked out.

MR. REIDY: How is that going to be worked out?

MR. PHILLIPS: It's going to be worked out through a consensus process. My next overhead. But what will happen is right away we need to get at

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least two advisory committees organized. One would be an advisory committee for each of the contractors, one in reading, one in math. That would be a policy-oriented advisory committee, people like yourselves on that group.

We also want to get a technical committee organized for each of the subject areas, also associated with the contractor, and lots of other committees as well. There will probably be something on item test specifications, item writing, a whole number of other things that would get built into the contract, which we would be monitoring.

MR. SHELTON: Gary? Gary? If I can go back a couple of bullets before, the one that says, "NAEP Framework" but with different item and test specifications? And the bullet that follows that is the one that talks about linking the national test to NAEP and TIMSS. And there's some conflict between those because the more you move away in terms of test specifications, the more --

MR. PHILLIPS: Exactly. That's a balancing act. What you want is you want something

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that fits. You want maybe NAEP, and you want a national test for reading. So, actually, this is --

MR. POGGIO: You stayed away from NRT.

(Laughter.)

MR. PHILLIPS: What you want is you want to have this be 80 to 90 percent. And you get something like that. Now, the more you get away from that, the more you have to move down to other linking methods. So in terms of linking, you've got inflating. This will do like the old national test in reading, the new national test in reading.

If you go down a little bit more, you have something called calibration. This is what we do in NAEP right now. This is how we link the NAEP assessment, through calibration.

You drop down a little further, you get predictions; and then even further, you get moderations. And so depending on how much this overlap is and other things, it depends on which level of linking you're going to get.

So what you want to do is move up as much as you can, maybe up to here if you possibly can. If

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not, we'll be down here. But I don't think we're going to get down to this level.

Just another example, a prediction. That's something we did when we had the IEAP test and NAEP, which is this. For TIMSS and NAEP, we're doing this much.

So, I mean, you know, we've done all of these things. We're all over the place. And so does every other --

MR. REIDY: Gary, would you agree that if the standard we're most concerned about is basic, then that is going to drive some of the test specifications?

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes.

MR. REIDY: So we make sure we can be pretty confident in our distinction around that.

MR. PHILLIPS: Right.

MR. REIDY: That would have a significant impact on the shape of those overlapping bends.

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes. The only reason why you want different test specifications is that if this is the proficiency of students currently, a little bit

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shift to the right of that, to the difficulty of the test. What we want to do is to get it more targeted to the population so we get the best measurement throughout the whole range.

Now, if it turns out that there's a big commitment to basic, if that turns out to be the case, then we want to get items that are measured in basic as well as possible, something like that. So we target the test.

Those are all things that have to be developed over a period of two years.

MR. REIDY: But the performance standard is part of the design consideration?

MR. PHILLIPS: The performance standard is fixed on a NAEP scale. It's a criterion-referenced standard. It's fixed from year to year, never changes until there's a revision of the framework.

For example, we've had three assessments in math: '90, '92, and '96. The basic level in math is the same all three years. Even though the distribution might go up or down, the standard stays the same.

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MR. REIDY: Page 106 of the current NAEP, though, report discussing the changes in the 1990 and '92 notwithstanding.

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes, but what we did there is because of the changes in the items, there was a big concern that we couldn't maintain the scale. And so, therefore, an independent study was conducted in '96 to confirm that the scale was maintainable. And it turned out that it was okay.

So there was just a fluke. It's quite possible that it could have gone the other direction. But we spent a lot of money and time on an extra independent study.

Okay.

MR. FISHER: Gary?

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes?

MR. FISHER: A question about the NAEP framework with different item and test specifications. Conceptually does this mean that you're creating a new test for all practicable purposes?

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes, right.

MR. FISHER: But you're going to report

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out or have this linkage to the NAEP scale?

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes.

MR. FISHER: And your anticipation is that the user will gain meaning from interpreting your results against those NAEP standards. The thing I'm wondering is whether that's a quantum leap if your items to these new specs are really far removed from what is underlying that NAEP scale and NAEP standards or would the user be misinterpreted, misconcluding the results?

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes, you're right. As this intersection gets small, we have less confidence in the estimate. And at some point, you don't report it.

So the trick here is when you're developing a national test in reading to make sure in the development process you don't get too far removed from NAEP. And so it's a balancing act.

MR. FISHER: Then that begs the question.

Why would this system not be developed around the NAEP framework items and specifications and scale so that all you're doing is providing subsets of

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questions that can easily be administered in the conditions which you want?

MR. PHILLIPS: Obviously NAEP could have been a way to go at this. For example, the market basket idea being considered by the National Assessment Governing Board is an example of an individual test that could be used for this purpose.

I think the goal in the Department and in the White House was to not do something that would corrupt NAEP as a state and national indicator. It's doing a good job for the purpose that's been designed. It's been doing a good job for 25 years. It's still doing a good job.

And so the concern if we made NAEP a test and gave it to all students, particularly if we didn't get any information back from the states and school districts, we would really have no more -- it would lose its value as an indicator.

So the goal here is to still achieve that same sort of high standard that NAEP represents in both content and in terms of proficiency but at the same time preserve NAEP as an indicator. So that's

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what really led us to this.

MR. POGGIO: But if you're assessing all children and you're so close, doesn't NAEP in reading at fourth grade and math at eighth grade become a dinosaur?

MR. PHILLIPS: Well --

MR. POGGIO: In approximating 80 percent or better, you can read the state data. You're saying you're going to build a national norm out of tasks.

It's not going to be just a norm for the tests in the states that use it. I don't understand the allegiance to NAEP in these two areas.

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, don't you think we ought to wait until we get to that point before we make that conclusion? I mean, it might be that there will be some adjustments made between NAEP and this task, but I think that's down the road.

MR. SHELTON: But I know development is you get what the specifications call for.

MR. PHILLIPS: Right.

MR. SHELTON: And if you say, "Build it to look like that," you will build it to look like

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that.

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes. There will be a lot of overlap between the two.

MR. SHELTON: And any variance is error in the process.

MR. PHILLIPS: That's correct. But I keep going back to the fact that the NAEP frame is this big because the design of NAEP allows you to cover a frame that's that big.

MR. SHELTON: Sure.

MR. PHILLIPS: And when you make it an individual 90-minute test, maybe you're going to cover this.

MR. POGGIO: And any test knows to sample the behavior that's out there. And I assume that sampling here will give you a reasonable inference to the entire domain. If it doesn't, then we really have a construct problem. I don't know. I don't find that.

MR. PHILLIPS: See, I think this is why we're talking about maybe --

MR. POGGIO: Fine.

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MR. PHILLIPS: You can estimate what the student would have gotten in a larger domain of items based on a subset of items, which don't even have to be randomly selected. So that technology is, in fact, released for Maryland the last time I checked.

I think the bigger issue about what will be the value of NAEP in the future is a future question. Who knows how this is going to develop? We're only like three weeks into this process, as opposed to three years. And things will look different three years down the road.

MS. REDFIELD: But you may come back to some of the same answers after three years.

MR. PHILLIPS: We may. That's right.

MS. KOPRIVA: As you build these advisory committees, I urge you to make sure that you have folks on there from states, including people from states who are doing this on some of the --

MR. PHILLIPS: Trust that we'll do a lot of advisory committees.

MS. KOPRIVA: Okay. The other is that I hope that built into all of the advisory committees

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maybe you also have an additional one, but certainly built in should be thinking in terms of accessibility for all students to piggyback on Ruben's because I think it's real important that we begin thinking about how to build those into the tests themselves as they are being developed and not just think about accommodating after the fact.

MR. PHILLIPS: Right.

MS. KOPRIVA: But to do that, we've got to think in terms of that's got to be thought through from the bottom up as they're being developed, not stuck on at the end.

MR. PHILLIPS: Right. I agree with you 100 percent. A good model for that is what is done in the NAEP project, where standing committees in each subject, like, let's say, reading, are determined. They're selected based on first involvement in the framework, then the field testing, then data collection, then analysis.

So you follow the project from the beginning to the end. That way they can compare if what they got out at the end is the same as the

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revision up front. And we happen to have a separate one of those for disabilities and --

MS. KOPRIVA: But what I'm saying is that I think it's important seeing what has occurred in the current and past NAEP tests that there have been huge areas where some of the processes have not -- you haven't taken full advantage of when a test is being developed and the processes of the test are being developed to be as accessible as possible. There just are ways, other ways, to do it that weren't included.

So, by doing that, in a sense when you look at the end, there are some real problems. I hope we can learn from that and make sure that we build in some of those new things from the beginning.

MR. PHILLIPS: Let me show you what the assessment cycle is like. It will be a three-year assessment cycle. We have a graph at the end of your overheads that will look something like this. And I would like to use an example of the year 2000 to illustrate the point.

In the year 2000, which is right here, we're going to be collecting data in the year 2000.

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But in the year 1999 we'll be field testing forms, doing the equating and the linking. And in the year '98 we'll be developing items, writing items and piloting the items, in 1998. So it's a three-year assessment cycle.

To get to the year 2000, you start here.

You end up here. And, also, in each year we'll be doing three different things. In the year 2000 we'll be collecting data for the year 2000. We'll be field testing forms for 2001 and developing items for the year 2002.

MR. FISHER: Gary, does it apply to you coming to us asking for us to volunteer to field test each of those years?

MR. PHILLIPS: Are you saying like through EAF and things like that or --

MR. FISHER: Well, no. I'm assuming that if you want this to have good national links and so forth, then you have to have a random sample.

MR. PHILLIPS: Oh, yes. Right.

MR. FISHER: You'll be sending me a letter saying that you want certain schools in Florida

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where the Hispanic populations are --

MR. PHILLIPS: We'll have that, yes. But these samples will not be as large as you're used to in NAEP because we're not getting national norms for all of the things that we do in NAEP. It's going to be smaller samples, but yes, there will be national probability samples drawn.

MR. REIDY: The black boxes represent the real test?

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes.

MR. REIDY: The one that counts?

MR. PHILLIPS: Right.

MR. REIDY: Will the real test consist of items that are being field tested or whatever for the following cycle --

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes.

MR. REIDY: -- or will that be done separate from the test itself?

MR. PHILLIPS: Again, this is the current plan. We have to have an idea of how this might work going into writing our RFP because we have to budget it and structure it and things like that. But in the

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process of bidders bidding on the RFP, they might have ideas that we would change our mind. But this is where we are today.

MR. CONATY: Gary, let me just ask Ed a clarification question. I think your concern is: Will there be items that the children take in those black boxes that don't count?

MR. REIDY: Right.

MR. PHILLIPS: Okay. What we have to do, one of the challenges here, what you want to do is to make sure that the test administration conditions, including the motivation levels, are the same in the field test as they are here. And we have to guarantee that.

So that's a difficult issue. I don't have a ready answer for you. But I think there are ways of doing that so that to a student --

MR. REIDY: Imbedded on the actual test.

MR. PHILLIPS: Exactly, right, or you can embed it as a -- that's one way of doing it, yes.

MR. SHELTON: But then it eats into your 90 minutes.

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MR. PHILLIPS: Right, right. And that's why I don't have that as an approach I'm using. But you're right. That's another approach that could be used.

MR. REIDY: But the time has to be provided no matter what. I mean, either it's eats into my 90 minutes or I've got to draw a separate sample, some of us have to draw a separate sample. So it's not a question of whether the time will be given. It's just where the time will be.

MR. PHILLIPS: I'm coming down on the side of drawing a separate sample. But that has to get worked through the system.

MR. POGGIO: Then what's the footnote? I thought the footnote suggested that there was parallel administration of --

MR. PHILLIPS: Right. In 1998, in preparation for the year 2000 -- let's just say to get you to the year of 1999, a number of forms -- I don't know how many. I put six down here in the sample.

A number of forms will be field tested in 1998 at the same time as we will be doing our

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assessment and a comparable foundation, conditions sample.

In the field test, we might set things back, stuff like that. I'm not sure exactly what we'll do yet, but we'll make the testing conditions as comparable as possible.

Okay. In also this year, these forms will be equated to each other. And, by the way, there will have been prior development. This is a problem getting started in that we may have to do development outside of the RFP. Once you get started, for example, in the year 2000, this will work just fine.

Let's say that we have intact forms here in 1998, those have been equated and linked to NAEP and TIMSS, NAEP for reading and NAEP and TIMSS for math.

And after looking at all of the data, we have to choose one form for the 1999 administration.

Let's just say that we have decided to use this guy right here. So this becomes what we administer in 1999.

Now, these other forms, it might be that

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another form like this one with a little bit of fixing up could be a good form. So we might want to fix it up and field test it again in 1999.

Okay. So while we're giving this administration in 1999, we're going to do field testing for the year 2000, which is this thing right here. So in 1999 we're administering the test for '99 and doing the field testing for the year 2000.

MS. REDFIELD: Where I'm thinking, Gary, is that from a design perspective, you may be able to even out the motivational differences between those; for example, in '98 and so forth. But in the real world, as time goes on, the consequences may be very different from location to location.

So one administration needs to be over time. However, it's not the --

MR. PHILLIPS: Right. It varies over time and within these. I agree with you. I don't have all the answers to the motivation question right now, but I'm just saying I'm aware of the problem.

MR. POGGIO: What you're saying is the standard varies as a function of motivation. And it

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shouldn't. The standard is a standard. Students in one year happen to be more motivated or less.

MR. PHILLIPS: It's not the standard, right, the performance.

MR. FERRARA: Gary, something I don't understand here, if that first form in '98 becomes a field test form in '99, let's assume that the thing that would never happen will happen and that it doesn't work out its second field test in '99 when you're in the operational administration.

MR. PHILLIPS: Then we don't use it in 2000.

MR. FERRARA: Yes, I know. But how do you report the kids who took it in '99?

MR. PHILLIPS: That's the motivation. We have to find ways to report. Are you talking about this form or this form?

MR. FERRARA: The latter. If that doesn't work out, it has items that don't fit or whatever.

MR. PHILLIPS: Again, that's a motivation question. We have to find ways of creating the

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motivational environment for each of these forms that we have here.

One way of doing that might be to take this field test form and all the students who take it and give a report to their parents and their teachers, something like that. But I don't know all the details.

MR. FERRARA: Okay. The question remains, then, if you have a field test form in an operational administration and there's a problem with items in the test -- I'm not talking about the motivation issue. It's the technical problems in the test. So you can't report it out on the scale. How are you going to report those kids?

MR. POGGIO: The field test. First of all, the only test that's reported is the field test serves as the developer, not the --

MR. FERRARA: I know, but there are kids. Every kid is supposed to be participating. Every kid is supposed to get a report. If they're taking a field test form and it fails --

MR. PHILLIPS: Let me answer one way you

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could do it.

MR. FERRARA: Am I asking a dumb question?

MR. PHILLIPS: No. It's a great question. I'm afraid when I answer, you will think this is written in stone.

One way of doing it is this. Let's say that we have a -- our national test in reading scale goes this way and there is some relationship between this test and the domain.

What might happen is if we have a form that's got a few defective items on it, we can't use that old test. So you use the items that you can use.

And that might create something like this, at which point we report. Instead of reporting this score, we report this score or whatever it might turn out to be.

MR. FERRARA: Like what UTS did with the SAT a couple of weeks --

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes.

MR. FERRARA: I just wanted to hear what you felt there.

MR. FISHER: Gary, you said you want to

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report on the scale, the NAEP scale, and you have an annual assessment design. But the NAEP is not annual.

MR. PHILLIPS: It is under the redesign. This assumes the redesign is going to go forward.

MR. FISHER: But does this assume that the reading, for example, will be an annual assessment?

MR. PHILLIPS: No, not necessarily, although we are doing some thinking about that.

MR. FISHER: Okay. Let's assume --

MR. PHILLIPS: What it assumes is that there will be some NAEP assessment there and that we can piggyback on that. For example, just right now the long-term trend, you have reading, math, science, and writing all being administered at the same time.

It doesn't really matter whether you're doing math or science or whatever. You can get into that school. The cost is getting to the school. Once the school is selected and agrees to participate, you can assess other subjects in that school. And you can't use all of the schools for that, but you can use like a third of them.

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MR. FISHER: My point is that you apparently have in mind that the scale and the national means and so forth that go with it will be calculated each year.

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes, that's correct. Yes. And the linking is down here, too. The equating, linking, field testing is done every year. So, again, it's right here. Why you're not in the year 2000, you're doing data collection.

You're doing everything, the linking, equating, all that this year, field testing and developing items. And once it gets started, gets on the cycle, it becomes sort of routine.

MR. FISHER: If any state chooses to participate in this, they are permitting themselves not only to 100 percent, let's say, student population for the universe, for the regular test, but also the substantive, whatever that will be, field test.

MR. PHILLIPS: But we're likely to ask states to participate in the field testing, even if they are not participating in the assessment, just as you do in NAEP right now.

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Right now the national sample in NAEP is about 30 states. So all states don't participate in a national sample. And some of the states that do participate in it are not participating in the state NAEP, for example.

MR. FISHER: Okay. But we already have -- and you just need to think about this. We already have problems getting people to participate in the level of field testing and NAEP participation and state NAEP participation that we have now. So we have to work harder.

MS. KOPRIVA: Can I ask you a question?

MR. PHILLIPS: Sure.

MS. KOPRIVA: This is all going to be paid for by you folks?

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes. Well, no.

(Laughter.)

MS. KOPRIVA: I liked the first answer.

MR. SHELTON: I was going to say the most interesting case to me was this one.

MR. PHILLIPS: You're always one ahead of me. Let's go to the next one. This is for you. The

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idea here is that the administration, scoring, and reporting would be conducted by a license test site.

That could be a state, a district, a test publisher, or some other organizational entity that has to be decided between now and next year or so.

The first administration would be in April-May of 1999. The administration will be carried out by a licensed test administrator. The contractor will issue the licenses, but this does not necessarily mean it's the same contractor that develops the test.

So we have to work internally on how that will be done.

The options are we could do it, we could contract it out, an association could do it. There are a lot of different options. We have to work that out. But there will be some kind of a licensing agreement.

During the first year of administration, during the first year of administration, and possibly in subsequent years, the contractor will reimburse the licensee for the cost of administration.

At least in the first year we have a

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commitment from the President, the White House, that there will be reimbursement for the first year, which is to get you used to --

(Laughter.)

MS. KOPRIVA: To get our public trust.

MR. PHILLIPS: To get you interested.

(Laughter.)

MR. PHILLIPS: And then there might be subsequent reimbursement as well, but we don't know that at this point. The test administration will be consistent with also the -- and also the IVEA. And test-recording strategies are going to be local options.

Now, one thing that we may have embedded in the contract is monitoring so that there can be some guarantee to both the government and the public that we're all using the same level playing field. So there is likely to be some kind of monitoring activity in there, although it can't be as much as we do at NAEP.

We monitor 25 percent of the states, for example, and the national sample, all of the schools

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in the national sample. In new states, we monitor 50 percent of the schools. That's too much for this project. This is a much bigger project in terms of numbers of schools.

MR. FISHER: I have a plan to beat. I have a plan to beat. In this administration in April-May 1999, I administer your test to a random representative sample of students, all of whom have already taken my FCAT test.

I thereby calibrate my FCAT test on your national NAEP scale, which is stable and is not going to change from year to year as you proceed because you're anchored, you're linked to the NAEP scale.

So from that point forward, I don't have to administer your test at all. I administer my test.

And I've already established the link to the national test through yours. And so I get all of the benefits, none of the headaches.

MR. POGGIO: I've even got a better plan. My thought was only participate in the field test. Don't administer it all. If the field test is working, you're going to be able to forecast any data

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with a random sample. All you have to do is the field test.

MR. PHILLIPS: Are you suggesting that we just use the Florida test for the whole nation or --

MR. POGGIO: We could work a deal.

MR. FISHER: And I can beat your price.

(Laughter.)

MR. PHILLIPS: Okay. I'm going to --

MR. FISHER: You didn't answer my suggestion.

MR. PHILLIPS: Okay. I don't see that as viable in this. I mean, it's good for you, for the State of Florida. It will work great for you. I'm not sure it will work for the other United States.

MR. FISHER: I understand that.

MR. PHILLIPS: The other option is, of course, you could do 50 of these things. That gets to be unwieldy from a technical point of view because, even though Florida could compare itself, let's say, to NAEP and Kentucky compare itself to NAEP, I'm not sure that Kentucky can compare itself to Florida.

MR. FISHER: But my comment was a serious

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one because you've been talking all afternoon about 100 percent census participation. So I put on the table a different model that says I administer your test to a sample of my students. That's the first thing that's on the table.

The second thing that's on the table is if I do that and establish that linking and assuming that my test is just as robust as yours, the linking can't be any worse than the linking you're going to do to TIMSS and everything else.

MR. PHILLIPS: I don't see why you couldn't do this. This test is available to you. You could do with it essentially what you want within the limits that we set. And if you want to do this kind of linking, you can, but I want to again reiterate you can do this right now with NAEP.

MR. FISHER: I understand that.

MR. PHILLIPS: You can start tomorrow.

MR. FISHER: I understand that. But, see, the national government is going to come out with this highly visible thing, which can't be easily ignored. And, therefore, it might be to my advantage

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to do what I just said.

MR. PHILLIPS: You could do that.

MR. FISHER: So what I'm hearing you say is that there's nothing in your plans that would forbid that.

MR. PHILLIPS: Absolutely not. A state could take this new test, just like it could take NAEP right now, link your testing program to this new test, and give estimated scores for everybody in here and basically based on a random sample of kids in your state and give an estimated score on this new test if you wanted.

You could do it now. You could do it in the future. And since this is completely voluntary, it's not a problem.

MR. POGGIO: Gary, that's not --

MR. PHILLIPS: But that design is not good for state by state comparison at all. From a national point of view, we would like to be able to go to the states.

And if you have NAEP here and let's say you've got Florida here, well, Florida there might be

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a 80 percent overlap for, let's say, even an 80 percent overlap with NAEP and Florida -- so let's say we've got Kentucky over here. That might be 80 percent, too, between NAEP, but there might only be a 2 or 3 percent overlap between Florida and Kentucky.

MR. FISHER: But if I'm linked to the NAEP scale and he's linked to the NAEP scale, then we are linked to the NAEP scale.

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes. But that doesn't mean that you can compare Kentucky to Florida with those data. Let's imagine how this looks when you get other states. You're going to get some states here and here, some way down here, all over the place.

And the error in that kind of linking system doesn't work in terms of having a stable understanding of what's going on over time.

MR. POGGIO: But the illustration you were using flies in the face of an American reading test, which is what Marshall was talking about. I've looked at the standards. You're all doing the same thing. I've looked at your tests. You're all doing the same thing. In fact, you don't have

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non-overlapping Venn diagrams. Florida --

MR. FERRARA: Would you accept his
assertion --

MR. POGGIO: No, of course not.

(Laughter.)

MR. POGGIO: What I'm saying is you can't
have it both ways. Now methodology goes back to
policy, which is this test will drive curriculum away
from what it is you're doing, away from what it is
you're doing, away from what it is we're doing.
That's the point.

MR. FERRARA: Gary, one thing that wasn't
clear to me in your exchange with Tom was: Is there
anything -- you know, this is going to be voluntary
within the limits that somebody sets for us. Is one
of those limits that we have to do census testing or
can we test --

MR. PHILLIPS: No.

MR. FERRARA: Okay. Good.

MR. MARTIN: The only limit is going to
be the public demand or reaction if you don't.

MR. PHILLIPS: There will be some

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districts that will do it and some that won't, some states that will and some that won't. Some will want to do sampling. Some will want to do census testing.

There are lots of different --

MR. FERRARA: That's how we use NRT right now.

MR. PHILLIPS: Right. There will be a lot of different varieties there. There will be some that will say -- I don't know what they will be, but there will be some uses for this test. I'm assuming that we would say, "You should not use this test for that purpose."

MR. POGGIO: Can I ask: Going back to a point we started to touch on, have you done a fiscal analysis? If your plan holds true and states are to incur the costs after the first year or perhaps the second year, what do you anticipate the per-student costs to be on states?

MR. PHILLIPS: I think I can't talk about budget or costs here.

MS. CHANG: We'd rather not talk about costs.

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MR. PHILLIPS: We do have a cost estimate, but that's the cost to us. What the cost would be to you would be determined by whether or not, for example, you can do it with in-house staff. Some districts and states can. Some cannot. Which contract are you going to go with, let's say, to do a scoring analysis and reporting?

MR. POGGIO: But you will provide the booklets and supporting material?

MR. PHILLIPS: Okay. That's another. That's a good question. We'll either do that or we might provide like an electronic version, which can then be turned in. It's a budget issue.

MR. POGGIO: Do the states pay for that or is that a cost you absorb?

MR. PHILLIPS: If it turns out that we provide an electronic version of the test, then the states would pay for the cost of printing the booklets. If it turns out that we provide booklets, then we would cover that cost.

MS. REDFIELD: You know what would be great? If you guys would do this for us at every

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grade and there was like this national standard. And we would turn our teachers into FD, what we call the off-grades now. That would be a service.

MR. REIDY: That was Doris Redfield.

(Laughter.)

MR. PHILLIPS: What did you say, Steve?

MR. FERRARA: There are options on --

MR. PHILLIPS: We will set the limits on the training and that sort of thing for scoring, but the current thinking is that's a local option. Let's say you're a school district.

Some school districts have the capacity -- when you get the license, you have to show that you have the capacity to do the work. That capacity could be in-kind, cost, or it could be by contracting out.

If you don't have the funds or the staff, you can't give this test.

So you've got to demonstrate through this licensing process that you have the capacity to do it.

And they could be done in a number of different ways.

Administration could be done by -- we'll probably have some limits on which teachers can administer it,

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but it could be done by local teachers. It could be done by contractor.

The same thing could be true of scoring, analysis, and reporting. The reporting is a local option, too. Some districts will just want to send back a note to parents saying this is how you're doing. Others may want to have a full-blown report with breakdowns and things like that.

Another important ingredient here, by the way, is this is just the test. We're not providing background items. So if you want to ask students like what is their race/ethnicity or what instructional practices they have been using, that's something you would provide. It's not something we'll provide.

So it's not like NAEP, where you've got hundreds of additional questions related to the student/teacher/school background.

MR. FERRARA: Can we talk about the scoring a little bit more?

MR. PHILLIPS: Sure.

MR. FERRARA: So the licensing process if a system in any one of our states or a state wanted to

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do its own scoring, the licensing process would have to involve certifying that that scoring system provides accurate scores. Otherwise it blows the whole reporting system.

MR. PHILLIPS: So would there be an auditing system of scoring a sample of papers from each, a monitoring system of some sort? Part of the monitoring would be the monitoring of education, scoring, and things like that.

MR. FERRARA: That goes partway to my question, then. The rest of my question was: Then would there be -- are there thoughts of having that extend to rescoring a sample of papers from each scoring site?

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes. That, of course, is an issue. There are several big issues here that still need to get worked out for the specific process. One is the test security question. Lots of people are going to want to get their hands on this test ahead of time. So you've got to make sure that doesn't happen.

And when you start putting it out in the

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districts, if the window is too wide, then it's going to be in the schools for a longer period of time, at which point they will be taken out of the package and distributed and Xeroxed and things like that. So we've got to worry about that.

And the other one is the quality control.

We need a quality control procedure built into this, which is the responsibility of the contractor to do some random spot-checking or whatever the system is we might come up with that will guarantee to the public and to the government that everybody is following the rules for both administration and scoring.

MR. SHELTON: So you're thinking about a wide window, not --

MR. PHILLIPS: No. I'm thinking about a narrow window.

MR. SHELTON: But narrow enough to be a fixed national testing day?

MR. PHILLIPS: I'm not sure it will be a day or a week or what, but it will be some window. It will be bigger than a bread basket but not as big as two months.

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MR. REIDY: Why was this an OERI project, rather than an NCES project?

MR. PHILLIPS: It's an OERI project. Do you want me to answer that? I guess I will. Sue?

MS. BETKA: You can go ahead.

MR. PHILLIPS: It's an OERI project because the legislation for NCES requires that we maintain confidentiality of data. And the general feeling here is that we will still do that as part of the OERI, but it becomes almost impossible to do this work with the current NCES legislation.

For example, we can't identify even schools or students. So doing things like linking up between two tests is difficult for us because we can't both maintain the confidentiality of the student and do the linking.

So if there is a change in the legislation, that would be different, but at this point that's the law. And so other than the small research-type studies, I don't think NCES at this point is prepared to --

MR. REIDY: So that's a constraints

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issue?

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes, right.

MR. FEINBERG: I just wanted to mention something about costs. This is public information, actually. It was published in EdWeek, where Mike Smith is quoted as saying that the first year will cost you five dollars a head for the federal government to supply the test materials and scoring. I mean, that was how they calculated it.

It was in EdWeek. So it's not secret information. It would be about \$40 million, 8 million kids times 5. And that was in EdWeek last week.

MR. PHILLIPS: Real short.

MS. KOPRIVA: Real short.

MR. SHELTON: Gary, where do the national results come from? Do you come to us with a sample of students and then --

MR. PHILLIPS: No, no. We'll get the national results from the -- it will be from the linking and equating studies that we're doing because we're going to be administering both NAEP and this new test at the same time.

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MR. SHELTON: Right.

MR. PHILLIPS: It will be a small sample.

MR. SHELTON: Okay. But it's your sample.

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes.

MR. SHELTON: You score.

MR. PHILLIPS: Right.

MR. SHELTON: You administer. You score.

MR. PHILLIPS: Right.

MR. SHELTON: I don't think there are more uniform protocols.

MR. ELFORD: Will that be state by state as well?

MR. PHILLIPS: No. You mean the --

MR. ELFORD: Will it be state by state comparisons?

MR. PHILLIPS: We don't give state by state comparisons for this.

MR. SHELTON: The state by state comparisons --

MR. PHILLIPS: That comes from NAEP.

MR. SHELTON: -- would come from the --

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well, the state by state comparisons could come from the licensee arrangement, which is in terms of comparability.

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes. That's why we're not relying on data for this test to give us state by state comparisons. It's the main reason we want to rely on NAEP. NAEP will continue to do state by state comparisons, which it currently does.

MR. FISHER: Gary, for the record, I think five dollars is too small a cost. Now let's move on to the next point.

(Laughter.)

MR. REIDY: Let's make that unanimous.

MR. PHILLIPS: What do you think the number is?

MR. FISHER: Fifteen dollars, 15 to 20 per kid. I think you said April-May administration, somewhere in there? Okay. Then I presume we'll need several months to process this, and the results won't come back for three-four months.

MR. PHILLIPS: No. This will be processed quickly. I don't know the amount of time,

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but we're going to emphasize speed. We'd like to get the results out the same year that the student is in the school. If we test in April, we can get it out, let's say, in May.

MR. FISHER: In Florida, being somewhat rural, you have districts that dismiss by May 10th.

And so there's really a short window in there. So the practical implication is unless you're careful, you could be sending results back and nobody is there to open the box.

MR. PHILLIPS: Right. That's what we've got to be careful of. And, again, if it turns out that April we can't do it and still get the results out, we might have to move it back to March, something like that.

MR. REIDY: Gary, as we continue to talk, additional constraints get placed as cost constraints.

The cost has a major impact on this balance of multiple choice versus whatever form of constructed response you end up with. This business of testing in April and getting out in May places another constraint on that.

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For me it's fairly critical that we see this designed both in terms of what the people in the field in the discipline think makes sense relative to this national standard and then what the compromises are to fit into these other kinds of constraints. Otherwise these other constraints are going to do --

MS. KOPRIVA: They could kill us, right.

MR. REIDY: These are all design issues. These are not incidental kinds of things. If you could only have X minutes, that's going to have an impact. You only have X dollars. If you've got to turn it around overnight --

MR. PHILLIPS: What the criteria --

MR. REIDY: So my concerns have gone up in the last hour, not down.

MR. POGGIO: We always talk about a measurement criteria or reliability, objectivity, standardization. Normally there's a fifth one. It's called feasibility.

My goodness. You start moving into March. We're a small state. We do some testing in March. We need a whole month because of spring break

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I mean, you can't just pick a week and say we'll give the test.

Five dollars a head, turn it around in a month. That's a lot of open-ended scoring by somebody who's been certified. Is this really workable?

MR. PHILLIPS: I didn't mean to imply that we would go to March. It's April-May.

MR. POGGIO: Can you turn around an entire state's 90-minute, 45-minute open-ended response? What are people going to do with these things?

MR. PHILLIPS: I think it can be done. I agree it's difficult to do. And if it turns out that we can't do it, then we have to revisit the schedule, the time line.

I mean, we can always move this, for example, to the fall, instead of the spring. Right now it's in the spring --

MS. KOPRIVA: Also, this is like a --

MR. PHILLIPS: -- primarily because we're trying to get it out in 1999. There's no way to do it in the Fall of '98. So if you want to get it out in

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'99, we're backed up to the very last month or two in the school year.

I'm sorry.

MS. KOPRIVA: That's okay. Hopefully this will be -- this is the first of these meetings.

I think it's very important --

MR. PHILLIPS: Oh, sure.

MS. KOPRIVA: -- that, again, a group like this I guess be able to have some serious impact on all of these questions as they get answered.

MS. CHANG: And from a contracts point of view, I would ask you to take a look at our first statement of work and come back with your problems of our statement of work also.

MS. KOPRIVA: What I'm saying is I think it's real important that you have a collective because I think that that collective -- you can begin to get a sense of a consensus of concerns and a level of concern and also begin to problem-solve some solutions.

I mean, these states that have been doing some of this really might be able to figure some of

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this stuff out.

MR. PHILLIPS: Absolutely.

MR. FISHER: And I would like to go back and repeat something I think that everybody said one way or another. Technically this can be done. There's no question in my mind that everything that you've outlined from a technical standpoint can be solved.

What I worry about is all that other stuff, all the impact, all the utilization, all the interference, all the reactions, how it will affect or relate to the efforts we're doing with our own Florida-based thing. What will be the price in good will that we have to pay? Will it be offset by the good will we might get from some people?

So I think somewhere along the way as you are putting together your plans and so forth, it is not sufficient just for me to dial up on the Internet and see the work statement draft from your contract.

What I would like to see is a written outline of how the whole thing is going to be put together, sort of fill in the gaps on the questions

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that we've raised, more approach from a policy standpoint so we can go show that to various people and say, "How do you feel about this? What would be your reaction? Are you willing to participate?"

I'm still impressed by the fact that in fourth grade in Florida, we had to split our math test in the fifth grade. So we have fourth grade reading and fifth grade math because we couldn't pay the price to have math and reading.

And I don't mean financial. I mean people price to do a full-scale writing assessment plus full-scale reading assessment plus full-scale math assessment followed by districts' norm reference test followed by whatever NAEP does, field testing and regular and state.

Testing took over fourth grade from January 1st through May. And that's a price that the community could not pay. And that's why we ended up splitting off fifth grade. And that's also why we're starting to get rumbles of interference on NAEP participation in a state in which such participation is required by law.

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So I think that whole context needs to be very carefully looked at.

MR. MARTIN: The point I was trying to make very early with the two Mikes about the constraints --

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes.

MR. RODRIGUEZ: Carlos Rodriguez.

Just having been a fourth grade teacher, one of the time considerations is certainly that you wonder when you're teaching if you have this marked schedule and you're following a curriculum guideline or a textbook guideline that is not covered in the trajectories of that particular -- real problems of what John said earlier about testing where when you have that material, you're confident that you have the material within your ground schooling also because we don't take linear approaches to curriculum. And we don't know when these contents are going to be covered.

Gary, I wondered if it was a fair question to ask as we listened to the hearing the other when they raised the question of eliminating

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constructed responses as a way of saving time, costs, scoring, and if there has been sort of an assumption or acquiescence or acceptance, yes, you have to have constructed response.

MS. REDFIELD: I think in our state and in Kentucky as well that we've experienced those kinds of debates. There are so many constraints that whether you want to cut back on a constructed response or not, I think when you come back to multiple choice kinds of items because of scoring constraints, the cost constraint, development of time, I think we probably all, everyone in this room, agree.

I think that the idea of focusing national attention on the improvement of learning for all children in this country is the right thing to do.

I think where we get nervous and anxious is about how we go about doing that in a way that really has the consult that we want it to have.

And I hope, Gary, that you and folks with you at this operation are able to keep the argument on that goal.

MR. REIDY: I want to reiterate that and

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pick up off of -- I'm sorry. I didn't get your name.

MR. RODRIGUEZ: Carlos.

MR. REIDY: -- Carlos' point. If this national test becomes a multiple choice test, there is no question you will have done significant damage to an awful lot of work done throughout this country, no question whatsoever.

So it's not an acquiescence kind of thing. We had multiple choice. We said one of our problems was we were not tapping into all that we value.

So we have been talking as a legitimate thing in this country a balance that takes advantage of the efficiencies of multiple choice for some things and adds to that constructed response question, which seems to be the standard in the world, the civilized world, and has been for a long time.

Paul Black did something this weekend at the National Academy in which he talked about what was normal and how much that is a function of country and culture. But certainly what we think is normal psychometrically is not normal in the rest of the

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world, at least a good part of it.

So we have been doing a lot of work to say that just being able to respond to select questions does not adequately capture the constructs that we're interested in.

We're not asking that multiple choice not be part of that. We're asking that it be used intelligently along with other things and not just these two-minute exercises. And certainly, folks, if you write the number 57, rather than selecting the number 57, in my book that is not constructed response by --

MR. PHILLIPS: That's not what I mean by "constructed response." That's not what I mean.

Yes?

MR. FERRARA: Gary, this discussion has come full circle. And I say that as a positive thing. We're starting to bring back the themes we started with, which tells you how important those themes are.

You and Mike Cohen and Mike, Marshall, have repeatedly expressed your commitment to sort of helping us through this process because we know this

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is going to happen. And I believe that, and I appreciate that. But it's not reflected in this timetable because think of the impacts.

Carlos talked about the impact on curriculum realignment, the impact on when the scores get reported and they look different from our state scores and all that stuff. All that process, all the help in explaining, in helping the public understand is missing from this timetable.

MR. PHILLIPS: Let me tell you the reason why. We're in a little bit of an awkward position prior to the RFP. Once that is awarded, which will be in September, all of this advisory stuff that we're talking about will kick in in a more formal way.

Right now the only way we could have this conversation was to have an open public meeting, which is reported by a court reporter and on the Web and things like that, because we're in the process of awarding this contract.

So it's difficult for us, particularly for those among you who may be bidders or subcontractors to the RFP. So it's a very difficult

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position to be in.

And if you don't see a lot of advisory-type activity in the short run, it's for this reason. But trust me. Once this thing kicks in, once we know who the contractor is and things like that, you're going to be busy joining us in meetings to talk this through.

MR. POGGIO: Since it is a contract, why isn't there more in here about the system that leads into the design? Why isn't there more in terms of your ability to say to the contractor, "There are certain expectations we want," like heavy involvement in the field and development of specifications, to develop the test items?

MR. PHILLIPS: We have that, but that's the RFP. That's what we're going to be -- that's what the contractors will be bidding on. We can't --

MR. POGGIO: I think that will go a long way to offsetting --

MR. PHILLIPS: You will see it. We plan at the present time to have a draft of the RFP on the Web within hopefully several weeks or sometime in

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March. And we will be receiving public comment from that.

MS. CHANG: And that's when we want you to tell us, "You didn't address this heavy enough."

MR. PHILLIPS: Right. All the intimate details will be there.

MS. CHANG: "You need to spend more time doing that."

MR. POGGIO: One other observation as we wind down here. I think you heard a lot of conversation that went along the following lines. As strong as the design is that you may lay out here, -- and it is probably largely doable -- I think you need a parallel stream running alongside of this where perhaps you don't put in as much effort but you create an approach where states can choose to participate at their discretion under models that then link to their assessments. And that's really not here.

MR. PHILLIPS: I know it's not here, but we could make it explicit in the RFP.

MR. POGGIO: It would be nice if I knew from a state level that during field testing, during

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regular testing some provisions were being allowed that we could give the tests, link them along the assessment, then bridge back to yours. Rather than getting to us as the last step in that sequence, we need to initiate our work.

MS. KOPRIVA: Who is writing the RFP?

MR. PHILLIPS: Who is writing it?

MS. KOPRIVA: Yes.

MR. PHILLIPS: The guys sitting back there. Steve Gorman and Anne Sweet are the two officers.

MS. KOPRIVA: Okay. And so what I'm asking is that I think it's critically important that some groups like this not only react to a first finished draft but be able to shape the draft.

And some people would have to decide to do this. But I think this narrow point is much more difficult to add them after the fact than it is to build from the bottom up.

MR. PHILLIPS: That's why we keep putting them on the Web so that you have an opportunity to read it.

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MS. CHANG: And basically that's why we invited you here today.

MR. PHILLIPS: We're having a meeting today. You'll note the two of them are taking notes furiously back there. But we are limited in the kinds of meetings we can have prior to the issuance of this RFP. We are contractually limited. So that's just, unfortunately, the way it is.

So far we had a meeting a week or two ago that was a technical group. We had a meeting Tuesday with test publishers, a meeting with you today. It's another public meeting on Tuesday of next week. And there will be what we're calling a pre-solicitation meeting, which will be potential bidders of the RFP, where you can come in and ask questions.

What we have to do is make sure that any questions that are asked that we answer, everybody gets an opportunity to hear that answer. So that's the purpose of that. It's like a bidders' conference.

MR. SHELTON: I wanted to go back and indirectly kind of reiterate something that Ed said. I heard Mike calling a couple of times. I think it

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was in response to Tom's question about interacting to NAEP, the national test interacting with NAEP.

But I heard Mike say that's not something that we'd really have to decide now, that's not something we have to decide now. And I want to reiterate what Ed said. That is that if we're the ones that are going to be implementing this back home, we can't put off discussions like that. We need things right now.

I suspect most of my colleagues are in the same boat. We're putting together budget paperwork and things like that for the 1998-99 fiscal year. Well, if there are going to be impacts such as more staff work to coordinate field testing, to participate in equating studies, to still go forward with statewide NAEP, and things like that, we need to start building those things in right now.

I don't think any of the issues that we've brought up here today are issues that we can put off and talk about next year, when we get further down the road.

MR. PHILLIPS: I'm not suggesting that we

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will. I'm only saying in the short run until the RFP gets --

MR. SHELTON: No, no.

MR. PHILLIPS: Once that gets awarded --

MR. SHELTON: Not in response to what you said, Gary.

MR. PHILLIPS: Once that gets awarded, then there will be all sorts of opportunities.

MR. SHELTON: Yes.

MR. SNOWWHITE: Larry Snowwhite.

Just to clarify the question of test publishers' activity or reactions yesterday, the day before yesterday. I think that not all test publishers expressed concern for opposition to inclusion of constructed response.

There was I think a parallel concern expressed from the test publishers to the concerns that you all are expressing as to the workability, the feasibility of the proposal, how will it work, and within the constraints of time, probable cost, and time for administration, time to get a test out and reported in 1999. There are major constraints that

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constructed responses exacerbate.

Not all test publishers and probably all test publishers said, "We don't want constructed responses" in the context of: How is this going to work?

MR. FISHER: Gary? Two quick points, please.

MR. PHILLIPS: Okay. Yes. We're going to have to wind down in just a moment.

MR. FISHER: I didn't hear anywhere issued and you just filed this away in your mind somewhere the issue of private schools, charter schools, and home school.

And if you assume for a moment a state in which they are not participating in this 100 percent thing but they would be asked to participate in field tests, then the question pops up over who's going to administer the field test. Will this be an external contract monitored, et cetera, et cetera?

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes. Those are all good points. The issue of private schools, we have lawyers from OGC here today that are working on that question.

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Yes, it's not only filed away. We are actively pursuing these.

I want to say that I know you may want to have more conversation, but I think we need to shut things down. I want to say how important this has been.

As I say, this is the third meeting. All three of them have been excellent, each different, each completely different, different points of view, but all have been very helpful to us.

And I do wish we had more opportunities in the short run to talk this through. Maybe there will be other possibilities, like if you have meetings that you would like us to attend; for example, we're going to the National Assessment Governing Board next week. Mike Smith is going to be there.

And the things that we've said in public meetings we can reiterate and elaborate on. But there are some details we can't get into until the RFP is awarded.

But you have been extremely helpful. Your point of view is exactly the one we need, which

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is why we devoted this whole session to you. So thank you very much, and we'll chat with you later. Thanks.

(Whereupon, the foregoing matter was concluded at 3:52 p.m.)

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